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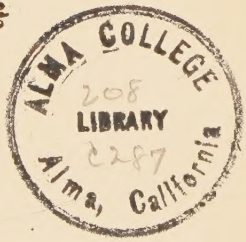

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THE RELIGIOUS STATE OF CATHOLIC COUNTRIES NO PREJUDICE TO THE SANCTITY OF THE CHURCH.

BY CARDINAL NEWMAN.[1]

I CONSIDERED, in the preceding Lecture,[2] the objection brought in this day against the Catholic Church, from the state of the countries which belong to her. It is urged, that they are so far behind the rest of the world in the arts and comforts of life, in power of political combination, in civil economy, and the social virtues, in a word, in all that tends to make this world pleasant and the loss of it painful, that their religion cannot come from above. I answered, that, before the argument could be made to tell against us, proof must be furnished, not only that the fact was as stated (and I think it should be very closely examined), but especially that there is that essential connection in the nature of things between true religion and temporal prosperity, which the objection took for granted. That there is a natural and ordinary connection between them no one would deny; but it is one thing to say that prosperity ought to follow from religion, quite another to say that it *must* follow from it. Thus, health, for instance, may be expected from a habit of regular exercise; but no one would positively deny the fact that exercise had been taken in a particular case, merely because the patient gave signs of an infirm and sickly state of the body. And, indeed, there may be particular and most wise reasons in the scheme of Divine Providence, whatever be the legitimate tendency of the Catholic faith, for its being left, from time to time, without

[1] Reprinted by permission from Lectures on "Difficulties felt by Anglicans in Catholic Teaching," delivered in 1850.

[2] "The Social State of Catholic Countries no Prejudice to the Sanctity of the Church." C. T. S. 1d.

any striking manifestations of its beneficial action upon the temporal interests of mankind, without the influence of wealth, learning, civil talent, or political sagacity; nay, as in the days of St. Cyprian and St. Augustine, with the actual reproach of impairing the material resources and the social greatness of the nations which embrace it: viz., in order to remind the Church, and to teach the world, that she needs no temporal recommendations who has a heavenly Protector, but can make her way (as they say) against wind and tide.

This, then, was the subject I selected for my foregoing Lecture, and I said there were three reasons why the world is no fit judge of the work, or the kind of work, really done by the Church in any age:—first, because the world's measure of good and scope of action are so different from those of the Church, that it judges as unfairly and as narrowly of the fruits of Catholicism and their value, as the Caliph Omar might judge of the use and the influence of literature, or rather indefinitely more so. The Church, though she embraces all conceivable virtues in her teaching, and every kind of good, temporal as well as spiritual, in her exertions, does not survey them from the same point of view, or classify them in the same order as the world. She makes secondary what the world considers indispensable; she places first what the world does not even recognize, or undervalues, or dislikes, or thinks impossible; and not being able, taking mankind as it is found, to do everything, she is often obliged to give up altogether what she thinks of great indeed, but of only secondary moment, in a particular age or a particular country, instead of effecting at all risks that extirpation of social evils, which, in the world's eyes, is so necessary, that it thinks nothing really is done till it is secured. Her base of operations, from the difficulties of the season, or the period, is sometimes not broad enough to enable her to advance against crime as well as against sin, and to destroy barbarism as well as irreligion. The world, in consequence, thinks, that, because she has not done the

world's work, she has not fulfilled her Master's purpose; and imputes to her the enormity of having put eternity before time.

And next, let it be observed that she has undertaken the more difficult work; it is difficult certainly to enlighten the savage, to make him peaceable, orderly, and self-denying; to persuade him to dress like a European, to make him prefer a feather-bed to the heather or the cave, and to appreciate the comforts of the fire-side and the tea-table; but it is indefinitely more difficult, even with the supernatural powers given to the Church, to make the most refined, accomplished, amiable of men, chaste or humble; to bring, not only his outward actions, but his thoughts, imaginations, and aims, into conformity to a law which is naturally distasteful to him. It is not wonderful, then, if the Church does not do so much in the Church's way, as the world does in the world's way. The world has nature as an ally, and the Church, on the whole, and as things are, has nature as an enemy.

And lastly, as I have implied, her best fruit is necessarily secret: she fights with the heart of man; her perpetual conflict is against the pride, the impurity, the covetousness, the envy, the cruelty, which never gets so far as to come to light; which she succeeds in strangling in its birth. From the nature of the case, she ever will do more in repressing evil, than in creating good; moreover, virtue and sanctity, even when realized, are also in great measure secret gifts, known only to God and good angels; for these, then, and other reasons, the powers and the triumphs of the Church must be hid from the world, unless the doors of the Confessional could be flung open, and its whispers carried abroad on the voices of the winds. Nor indeed would even such disclosures suffice for the due comparison of the Church with religions which aim at no personal self-government, and disown on principle examination of conscience and confession of sin; but in order to our being able to do justice to that

comparison, we must wait for that Day, when the books shall be opened and the secrets of hearts shall be disclosed. For all these reasons, then—from the peculiarity, and the arduousness, and the secrecy of the mission intrusted to the Church—it comes to pass that the world is led, at particular periods, to think very slightly of the Church's influence on society, and vastly to prefer its own methods and its own achievements.

So much I have already suggested towards the consideration of a subject, to which justice could not really be done except in a very lengthened disquisition, and by an examination of matters which lie beyond the range of these Lectures. If then to-day I make a second remark upon it, I do so only with the object I have kept before me all along, of smoothing the way into the Catholic Church for those who are already very near the gate; who have reasons enough, taken by themselves, for believing her claims, but are perplexed and stopped by the counter-arguments which are urged against her, or at least against their joining her.

I

To-day, then, I shall suppose an objector to reply to what I have said in the following manner: viz., I shall suppose him to say, that "the reproach of Catholicism is, not what it does not do, so much as what it does; that its teaching and its training do produce a certain very definite character on a nation and on individuals; and that character, so far from being too religious or too spiritual, is just the reverse, very like the world's; that religion is a sacred, awful, mysterious, solemn matter; that it should be approached with fear, and named, as it were, *sotto voce:* whereas Catholics, whether in the North or the South, in the Middle Ages or in modern times, exhibit the combined and contrary faults of profaneness and superstition. There is a bold, shallow, hard, indelicate way among them of speaking of even points of faith, which is, to use studiously mild language, utterly out of

taste, and indescribably offensive to any person of ordinary refinement. They are rude where they should be reverent, jocose where they should be grave, and loquacious where they should be silent. The most sacred feelings, the most august doctrines, are glibly enunciated in the shape of some short and smart theological formula ; purgatory, hell, and the evil spirit, are a sort of household words upon their tongue ; the most solemn duties, such as confession, or saying office, whether as spoken of or as performed, have a business-like air and a mechanical action about them, quite inconsistent with their real nature. Religion is made both free and easy, and yet is formal. Superstitions and false miracles are at once preached, assented to, and laughed at, till one really does not know what is believed and what is not, or whether anything is believed at all. The saints are lauded yet affronted. Take mediæval England or France, or modern Belgium or Italy, it is all the same ; you have your Boy-bishop at Salisbury, your Lord of Misrule at Rheims, and at Sens your Feast of Asses. Whether in the South now, or in the North formerly, you have the excesses of your Carnival. Legends such as that of St. Dunstan's fight with the author of all evil at Glastonbury are popular in Germany, in Spain, in Scotland, and in Italy ; while in Naples or in Seville your populations rise in periodical fury against the celestial patrons whom they ordinarily worship. These are but single instances of a widespread and momentous phenomenon, to which you ought not to shut your eyes, and to which we can never be reconciled ; —a phenomenon in which we see a plain providential indication, that, in spite of our certainty—first, that there *is* a Catholic Church, next that it is *not* the religious communion dominant in England, or Russia, or Greece, or Prussia, or Holland ; in short, that it *can* be nothing else *but* the communion of Rome,—still that it is our bounden duty to have nothing to do with the Pope, the Holy See, or the Church of which it is the centre." Such is the charge,

my brethren, brought against the Catholic Church, both by the Evangelical section of the Establishment and by your own.

II.

Now I will, on the whole and in substance, admit the fact to be as you have stated it, and next I will grant to you, that to no national differences can be attributed a character of religion so specific and peculiar; it is too uniform, too universal to be ascribed to anything short of the genius of Catholicism itself; that is, to its principles and influence acting upon human nature, such as human nature is everywhere found. I admit both your fact and your account of the fact; I accept it, I repeat in general terms what you have said; but I would add to it, and turn a particular fact into a philosophical truth. I say, then, that such a hard irreverent, extravagant tone in religion, as you consider it, is the very phenomenon, which must necessarily result from a revelation of divine truth falling upon the human mind in its existing state of ignorance and moral feebleness.

The wonder and offence which Protestants feel, arise, in no small measure, from the fact that they hold the opinions of Protestants. They have been taught a religion, and imbibed ideas and feelings, and are suffering under disadvantages which create the difficulty of which they complain; and, to remove it, I shall be obliged, as on some former occasions, against my will to explain a point of doctrine:— Protestants, then, consider, that faith and love are inseparable; where there is faith, there, they think, are love and obedience; and in proportion to the strength and degree of the former, are the strength and degree of the latter. They do not think the inconsistency possible of really believing without obeying; and, where they see disobedience, they cannot imagine the existence of real faith. Catholics, on the other hand, hold that faith and love, faith and obedience, faith and works are simply separable, and ordinarily separated in

fact; that faith does not imply love, obedience, or works; that the firmest faith, so as to move mountains, may exist without love,—that is real faith, as really faith in the strict sense of the word as the faith of a martyr or a doctor. In other words, when Catholics speak of faith, they are contemplating the existence of a gift which Protestantism does not even imagine. Faith is a spiritual sight of the unseen; and since in matter of fact Protestantism does not impart this sight, does not see the unseen, has no experience of this habit, this act of the mind—therefore, since it retains the word "faith," it is obliged to find some other meaning for it; and its common, perhaps its commonest, idea is, that faith is substantially the same as obedience; at least that it is the impulse, the motive of obedience, or the fervour and heartiness which attend good works. In a word, faith is hope or it is love, or it is a mixture of the two. Protestants define or determine faith, not by its nature or essence, but by its effects. When it succeeds in producing good works, they call it real faith; when it does not, they call it counterfeit—as though we should say, a house is a house when it is inhabited, but that a house to let is not a house. If we so spoke, it would be plain that we confused between house and home, and had no correct image before our minds of a house *per se*. And in like manner, when Protestants maintain that faith is not really faith, except it be fruitful, whether they are right or wrong in saying so, anyhow it is plain that the idea of faith, as a habit in itself, as a something substantive, is simply, from the nature of the case, foreign to their minds, and that is the particular point on which I am now insisting.

Now faith, in a Catholic's creed, is a certainty of things not seen, but revealed; a certainty, preceded indeed in many cases by particular exercises of the intellect, as conditions, by reflection, prayer, study, argument, or the like, and ordinarily, by the instrumental sacrament of Baptism, but caused directly by a supernatural influence on the

mind from above. Thus it is a spiritual sight; and the nearest parallel by which it can be illustrated is the moral sense. As nature has impressed upon our mind a faculty of recognizing certain moral truths, when they are presented to us from without, so that we are quite sure that veracity, for instance, benevolence, and purity, are right and good, and that their contraries involve guilt, in a somewhat similar way, grace impresses upon us inwardly that revelation which comes to us sensibly by the ear or eye; similarly, yet more vividly and distinctly, because the moral perception consists in sentiments, but the grace of faith carries the mind on to objects. This certainty, or spiritual sight, which is included in the idea of faith, is, according to Catholic teaching, perfectly distinct in its own nature from the desire, intention, and power of acting agreeably to it. As men may know perfectly well that they ought not to steal, and yet may deliberately take and appropriate what is not theirs; so may they be gifted with a simple, undoubting, cloudless belief, that, for instance, Christ is in the Blessed Sacrament, and yet commit the sacrilege of breaking open the tabernacle, and carrying off the consecrated particles for the sake of the precious vessel containing them. It is said in Scripture that the evil spirits "believe and tremble"; and reckless men, in like manner, may, in the very sight of hell, deliberately sin for the sake of some temporary gratification. Under these circumstances, even though I did not assume the Catholic teaching on the subject of faith to be true (which in the present state of the argument I fairly may do, considering whom I am addressing,) though I took it merely as an hypothesis, probable and philosophical, but not proved, still I would beg you to consider whether *as* an hypothesis, it does not serve and suffice to solve the difficulty which is created in your minds by the aspect of Catholic countries. This, too, at least I may say: if it shall turn out that the aspect which Catholic countries present to the looker-on is accounted for by Catholic doctrine, at least, that aspect will

be no difficulty to you when once you have joined the Catholic Church, for in joining the Church, you will be, of course, accepting the doctrine. Walk forward, then, into the Catholic Church, and the difficulty, like a phantom, will, as a matter of necessity, disappear. And now, assuming the doctrine as an hypothesis, I am going to show its bearing upon the alleged difficulty.

III.

The case with most men is this: certainly it is the case of any such large and various masses of men as constitute a nation, that they grow up more or less in practical neglect of their Maker and their duties to Him. Nature tends to irreligion and vice, and, in matter of fact, that tendency is developed and fulfilled in any multitude of men, according to the saying of the old Greek, that "the many are bad," or according to the Scripture testimony, that the world is the enemy of its Creator. The state of the case is not altered when a nation has been baptized; still, in matter of fact, nature gets the better of grace, and the population falls into a state of guilt and disadvantage in one point of view worse than that from which it has been rescued. This is the matter of fact, as Scripture prophesied it should be: "Many are called, few are chosen;" "The kingdom of heaven is like unto a net, gathering together of every kind." But still, this being granted, a Catholic people is far from being in the same state in all respects as one which is not Catholic, as theologians teach us. A soul which has received the grace of baptism receives with it the germ or faculty of all supernatural virtues whatever—faith, hope, charity, meekness, patience, sobriety, and every other that can be named; and if it commits mortal sin, it falls out of grace, and forfeits these supernatural powers. It is no longer what it was, and is, so far, in the feeble and frightful condition of those who were never baptized. But there are certain remarkable limitations and alleviations in its punishment, and one is this; that the faculty or power of

faith remains to it. Of course the soul may go on to resist and destroy this supernatural faculty also; it may, by an act of the will, rid itself of its faith, as it has stripped itself of grace and love; or it may gradually decay in its faith till it becomes simply infidel; but this is not the common state of a Catholic people. What commonly happens is this, that they fall under the temptations to vice or covetousness, which naturally and urgently beset them, but that faith is left to them. Thus the many are in a condition which is absolutely novel and strange in the ideas of a Protestant; they have a vivid perception, like sense, of things unseen, yet have no desire at all, or affection, towards them; they have knowledge without love. Such is the state of the many; the Church at the same time is ever labouring with all her might to bring them back again to their Maker; and in fact is ever bringing back vast multitudes one by one, though one by one they are ever relapsing from her. The necessity of yearly confession, the Easter communion, the stated seasons of indulgence, the high festivals, Lent, days of obligation, with their Masses and preaching,—these ordinary and routine observances, and the extraordinary methods of retreats, missions, jubilees, and the like, are the means by which the powers of the world unseen are ever acting upon the corrupt mass of which a nation is composed, and breaking up and reversing the dreadful phenomenon which fact and Scripture conspire to place before us.

Nor is this all: good and bad are mixed together, and the good is ever influencing and mitigating the bad. In the same family one or two holy souls may shed a light around and raise the religious tone of the rest. In large and profligate towns there will be planted here and there communities of religious men and women, whose example, whose appearance, whose churches, whose ceremonies, whose devotions, —to say nothing of their sacerdotal functions, or their charitable ministrations,—will ever be counteracting the intensity of the poison. Again, you will have vast multi-

tudes neither good nor bad; you will have many scandals; you will have, it may be, particular monasteries in a state of relaxation; rich communities breaking their rule, and living in comfort and refinement, and individuals among them lapsing into sin; cathedrals sheltering a host of officials, many of whom are a dishonour to the sacred place: and in country districts, priests who set a bad example to their flock, and are the cause of anxiety and grief to their bishops. And besides, you will have all sorts of dispositions and intellects, as plentiful of course as in a Protestant land: there are the weak and the strong-minded, the sharp and the dull, the passionate and the phlegmatic, the generous and the selfish, the idle, the proud, the sceptical, the dry-minded, the scheming, the enthusiastic, the self-conceited, the strange, the eccentric; all of whom grace leaves more or less in their respective natural cast or tendency of mind. Thus we have before us a confused and motley scene, such as the world presents generally; good and evil mingled together in all conceivable measures of combination and varieties of result; a perpetual vicissitude; the prospect brightening, and then overcast again; luminous spots, tracts of splendour, patches of darkness, twilight regions, and the glimmer of day; but in spite of this moral confusion, in one and all a clear intellectual apprehension of the truth.

Perhaps you will say that this conflict of good and evil is to be seen in a Protestant country in just the same way: that is not the point; but this,—that in a Catholic country on the mixed multitude, and on each of them, good or bad, is written, is stamped deep, this same wonderful *knowledge*. Just as in England, the whole community, whatever the moral state of the individuals, *knows* about railroads and electric telegraphs; and about the Court, and men in power, and proceedings in Parliament; and about religious controversies, and about foreign affairs, and about all that is going on around and beyond them: so, in a Catholic country, the ideas of heaven and hell, Christ and the evil spirits, saints, angels, souls in purgatory, grace, the

blessed Sacrament, the sacrifice of the Mass, absolution, indulgences, the virtue of relics, of holy images, of holy water, and of other holy things, are of the nature of *facts*, which all men, good and bad, young and old, rich and poor, take for granted. They are facts brought home to them by faith; substantially the same to all, though coloured by their respective minds, according as they are religious or not, and according to the degree of their religion. Religious men use them well, the irreligious use them ill, the inconsistent vary in their use of them, but all use them. As the idea of God is before the minds of all men in a community not Catholics, so, but more vividly, these revealed ideas confront the minds of a Catholic people, whatever be the moral state of that people, taken one by one. They are facts attested by each to all, and by all to each, common property, primary points of thought, and landmarks, as it were, upon the territory of knowledge.

IV.

Now, it being considered that a vast number of sacred truths are taken for granted as *facts*, by a Catholic nation, in the same sense as the sun in the heavens is a fact, you will see how many things take place of necessity, which to Protestants seem shocking, and which could not be avoided, unless it had been promised that the Church should consist of none but the predestinate; nay, unless it consisted of none but the educated and refined. It is the spectacle of supernatural faith acting upon the multitudinous mind of a people; of a divine principle dwelling in that myriad of characters, good, bad, and intermediate, into which the old stock of Adam grafted into Christ has developed. If a man sins grossly in a Protestant country, he is at once exposed to the temptation of unbelief; and he is irritated when he is threatened with judgment to come. He is threatened, not with what to him is a fact, but with what to him is at best an opinion. He has power over it; he holds it to-day, whether he shall hold it to-morrow he cannot exactly say;

it depends on circumstances. And, being an opinion, no one has a right to assume that it is anything more, or to thrust it upon him, and to threaten him with it. This is what is to him so provoking and irritating. Protestants hold that there is a hell, as the conclusion of a syllogism; they prove it from Scripture; it is from first to last a point of controversy, and an opinion, and must not be taken for granted as immutable. A vicious man is angry with those who hold opinions condemnatory of himself, because those opinions are the creation of the holders, and seem to reflect personally upon him. Nothing is so irritating to others as my own private judgment. But men are not commonly irritated by facts; it would be irrational to be so, as it is in children who beat the ground when they fall down. A bad Catholic does not deny hell, for it is to him an incontestable fact, brought home to him by that supernatural faith, with which he assents to the Divine Word speaking through Holy Church; he is not angry with others for holding it, for it is no private decision of their own. He may indeed despair, and then he blasphemes; but, generally speaking, he will retain hope as well as faith, when he has lost charity. Accordingly, he neither complains of God nor of man. His thoughts will take a different turn; he seeks to evade the difficulty; he looks up to our Blessed Lady; he knows by supernatural faith her power and her goodness; he turns the truth to his own purpose, his bad purpose; and he makes her his patroness and protectress against the penalty of sins which he does not mean to abandon. Such, I say, is the natural effect of having faith and hope without the saving grace of divine love.

Hence, the strange stories of highwaymen and brigands devout to the Madonna. And, their wishes leading to the belief, they begin to circulate stories of her much coveted compassion towards impenitent offenders; and these stories, fostered by the circumstances of the day, and confused with others similar, but not impossible, for a time are in repute. Thus, the Blessed Virgin has been reported to deliver the

reprobate from hell, and to transfer them to purgatory; and absolutely to secure from perdition all who are devout to her, repentance not being contemplated as the means. Or men have thought, by means of some sacred relic, to be secured from death in their perilous and guilty expeditions. So, in the Middle Ages, great men could not go out to hunt without hearing Mass, but were content that the priest should mutilate it, and worse, to bring it within limits. Similar phenomena occur in the history of chivalry: the tournaments were held in defiance of the excommunications of the Church, yet were conducted with a show of devotion; ordeals, again, were even religious rites, yet in like manner undergone in the face of the Church's prohibition. We know the dissolute character of the mediæval knights and of the troubadours; yet, that dissoluteness, which would lead Protestant poets and travellers to scoff at religion, led them not to deny revealed truth, but to combine it with their own wild and extravagant profession. The knight swore before Almighty God, His Blessed Mother, and—the ladies: the troubadour offered tapers, and paid for Masses, for his success in some lawless attachment; and the object of it in turn painted her votary under the figure of some saint. Just as a heathen phraseology is now in esteem, and "the altar of Hymen" is spoken of, and the trump of fame, and the trident of Britannia, and a royal cradle is ornamented with figures of Nox and Somnus; so in a Catholic age or country, the blessed Saints will be invoked by virtuous and vicious in every undertaking, and will have their place in every room of palace or of cottage. Vice does not involve a neglect of the external duties of religion. The Crusaders had faith sufficient to bind them to a perilous pilgrimage and warfare; they kept the Friday's abstinence, and planted the tents of their mistresses within the shadow of the pavilion of the glorious St. Louis. There are other pilgrimages besides military ones, and other religious journeys besides the march on Jerusalem; but the character of all of them is pretty much the same, as St. Jerome and St. Gregory

Nyssen bear witness in the first age of the Church. It is a mixed multitude, some members of it most holy, perhaps even saints; others penitent sinners; but others, again, a mixture of pilgrim and beggar, or pilgrim and robber, or half gipsy, or three-quarters boon companion, or at least, with nothing saintly and little religious about them. They will let you wash their feet, and serve them at table, and the hosts have more merit for their ministry than the guests for their wayfaring. Yet, one and all, saints and sinners, have faith in things invisible, which each uses in his own way.

V.

Listen to their conversation; listen to the conversation of any multitude of them or any private party: what strange oaths mingle with it! God's heart, and God's eyes, and God's wounds, and God's blood: you cry out, "How profane!" Doubtless; but do you not see that their special profaneness over Protestant oaths, lies not in the words, but simply in the speaker, and is the necessary result of that insight into the invisible world which you have not? You use the vague words "Providence," or "the Deity," or "good luck," or "nature"; you would use more sacred words did you believe in the things denoted by them; Catholics, on the contrary, whether now or of old, realize the Creator in His supernatural works and personal manifestations, and speak of the "Sacred Heart," or of "the Mother of mercies," or of "our Lady of Walsingham," or of "St. George for merry England," or of loving "St. Francis," or of dear "St. Philip." Your people would be as varied and fertile in their adjurations and invocations as a Catholic populace, if they had as rich a creed. Again, listen how freely the name of the evil spirit issues from the mouth even of the better sort of men. What is meant by this very off-hand mention of the most horrible object in creation, of one who, if allowed, could reduce us to ashes by the very hideousness of his countenance, or the odour of his breath? Well, I suppose they act upon the advice of the great St. Anthony

he, in the lonely wilderness, had conflicts enough with the enemy, and he has given us the result of his long experience. In the sermon which his far-famed biographer puts into his mouth, he teaches his hearers that the devil and his host are not to be feared by those who are within the fold, for the Good Shepherd has put the wolf to flight. Henceforth, the evil spirit could do no more than frighten them with empty noises (except by some particular permission of God), and could only pretend to do what was now really beyond his power. The experience of a saint, I suppose, is imprudently acted on by sinners; not as if Satan's malice were not equal to any assault upon body or soul, but faith accepts the word that his rule over the earth is now broken, and that any child or peasant may ordinarily make sport of him and put him to ridiculous flight by the use of the "Hail Mary," or holy water, or the sign of the cross.

Once more, listen to the stories, songs, and ballads of the populace; their rude and boisterous merriment still runs upon the great invisible subjects which possess their imagination. Their ideas, of whatever sort, good, bad, and indifferent, rise out of the next world. Hence, if they would have plays, the subjects are sacred; if they would have games and sports, these fall, as it were, into procession, and are formed upon the model of sacred rites and sacred persons. If they sing and jest, the Madonna, and the Bambino, or St. Joseph or St. Peter, or some other saint is introduced, not for irreverence, but because these are the ideas that absorb them. There is a festival in the streets; you look about; what is it you see? What would be impossible here in London. Set up a large Crucifix at Charing Cross; the police would think you simply insane. Insane, and truly; but why? why dare you not do it? why must you not? Because you are averse to the sacred sign? Not so; you have it in your chamber, yet a Catholic again would scarcely dare to do so, more than another. It is true that awful, touching, winning Form has before now converted the very savage who gazed upon it; he has wondered, has asked what it meant, has broken into

tears, and been converted ere he knew that he believed. The manifestation of love has been the incentive to faith. I cannot certainly predict what would take place, if a saint appealed to the guilty consciences of those thousand passers-by, through the instrumentality of the Divine Sign. But such occurrences are not of every day; what you would too securely and confidently foretell, my brethren, were such an exhibition made, would be, that it would but excite the scorn, the rage, the blasphemy, of the out-pouring flocking multitude, a multitude who in their hearts are unbelievers. Alas! there is no idea in the national mind, supernaturally implanted, which the Crucifix embodies. Let a Catholic mob be as profligate in conduct as an English, still it cannot withstand, it cannot disown, it can but worship the Crucifix; it is the external representation of a fact, of which one and all are conscious to themselves and to each other. And hence, I say, in their fairs and places of amusement, in the booths, upon the stalls, upon the doors of wine-shops, will be paintings of the Blessed Virgin, of St. Michael, or the souls in purgatory, or of some Scripture subject. Innocence, guilt, and what is between the two, all range themselves under the same banners; for even the resorts of sin will be made doubly frightful by the blasphemous introduction of some sainted patron.

VI.

You enter into one of the churches close upon the scene of festivity, and you turn your eyes towards a confessional. The penitents are crowding for admission, and they seem to have no shame, or solemnity, or reserve about the errand on which they are come; till at length, on a penitent's turning from the grate, one tall woman, bolder than a score of men, darts forward from a distance into the place he has vacated, to the disappointment of the many who have waited longer than she. You almost groan under the weight of your imagination that such a soul, so selfish, so unrecollected,

must surely be in very ill dispositions for so awful a sacrament. You look at the priest, and he has on his face a look almost of impatience, or of good-natured compassion, at the voluble and superfluous matter which is the staple of her confession. The priests, you think, are no better than the people. My dear brethren, be not so uncharitable, so unphilosophical. Things we thoroughly believe, things we see, things which occur to us every day we treat as things which *do* occur and *are* seen daily, be they of this world, or be they of the next. Even Bishop Butler should have taught you that "practical habits are strengthened by repeated acts, and passive impressions grow weaker by being repeated upon us." It is not by frames of mind, it is not by emotions, that we must judge of real religion; it is the having a will and a heart set towards those things unseen; and, though impatience and rudeness are to be subdued, and are faulty even in their minutest exhibitions, yet do not argue from them the absence of faith, nor yet of love, or of contrition. You turn away half satisfied, and what do you see? There is a feeble old woman, who first genuflects before the Blessed Sacrament, and then steals her neighbour's handkerchief, or prayer-book, who is intent on his devotions. Here at last, you say, is a thing absolutely indefensible and inexcusable. Doubtless; but what does it prove? Does England bear no thieves; or do you think this poor creature an unbeliever? or do you exclaim against Catholicism, which has made her so profane? But why? Faith is illuminative, not operative; it does not force obedience, though it increases responsibility; it heightens guilt, it does not prevent sin; the will is the source of action, not an influence, though divine, which Baptism has implanted, and which the devil has only not eradicated. She worships and she sins; she kneels because she believes, she steals because she does not love; she may be out of God's grace, she is not altogether out of His sight.

You come out again and mix in the idle and dissipated throng, and you fall in with a man in a palmer's dress,

selling false relics, and a credulous circle of customers buying them as greedily as though they were the supposed French laces and India silks of a pedlar's basket. One simple soul has bought of him a cure for the rheumatism or ague, the use of which might form a case of conscience. It is said to be a relic of St. Cuthbert, but only has virtue at sunrise, and when applied with three crosses to the head, arms, and feet. You pass on, and encounter a rude son of the Church, more like a showman than a religious, recounting to the gaping multitude some tale of a vision of the invisible world, seen by Brother Augustine of the Friars Minors, or by a holy Jesuit preacher who died in the odour of sanctity, and sending round his bag to collect pence for the souls in purgatory; and of some appearance of our Lady (the like of which has really been before and since), but on no authority except popular report, and in no shape but that which popular caprice has given it. You go forward, and you find preparations in progress for a great pageant or mystery; it is a high festival, and the incorporated trades have each undertaken their special religious celebration. The plumbers and glaziers are to play the Creation; the barbers the Call of Abraham; and at night is to be the grandest performance of all, the Resurrection and Last Judgment, played by the carpenters, masons, and blacksmiths. Heaven and hell are represented,—saints, devils, and living men; and the *chef d'œuvre* of the exhibition is the display of fireworks to be let off as the *finale*. "How unutterably profane!" again you cry. Yes, profane to you, my dear brother—profane to a population which only half believes; not profane to those who, however coarse-minded, however sinful, believe wholly, who, one and all, have a vision within, which corresponds with what they see, which resolves itself into, or rather takes up into itself, the external pageant, whatever be the moral condition of each individual composing the mass. They gaze, and, in drinking in the exhibition with their eyes, they are making one continuous and intense act of faith.

You turn to go home, and in your way, you pass through a retired quarter of the city. Look up at those sacred windows; they belong to the convent of the Perpetual Adoration, or to the poor Clares, or to the Carmelites of the reform of St. Theresa, or to the nuns of the Visitation. Seclusion, silence, watching, meditation, is their life day and night. The immaculate Lamb of God, is ever before the eyes of the worshippers; or at least the invisible mysteries of faith ever stand out, as if in bodily shape, before their mental gaze. Where will you find such a realized heaven upon earth? Yet that very sight has acted otherwise on the mind of a weak sister; and the very keenness of her faith and wild desire of approaching the Object of it, has led her to fancy or to feign that she has received that singular favour vouchsafed only to a few elect souls; and she points to God's wounds, as imprinted on her hands, and feet, and side, though she herself has been instrumental in their formation.

VII.

In these and a thousand other ways it may be shown, that that special character of a Catholic country, which offends you, my brethren, so much, that mixture of seriousness and levity, that familiar handling of sacred things, in word and deed, by good and bad, that publication of religious thoughts and practices, so far as it is found, is the necessary consequence of its being Catholic. It is the consequence of mixed multitudes all having faith; for faith impresses the mind with supernatural truths, as if it were sight, and the faith of this man, and the faith of that, is one and the same, and creates one and the same impression. The truths of religion then stand in the place of facts, and public ones. Sin does not obliterate the impression; and did it begin to do so in particular cases, the consistent testimony of all around would bring back the mind to itself, and prevent the incipient evil. Ordinarily speaking, once faith, always faith. Eyes once opened to good, as to evil, are not closed

again; and if men reject the truth, it is, in most cases, a question whether they have ever possessed it. It is just the reverse among a Protestant people;—private judgment does but create opinions, and nothing more; and these opinions are peculiar to each individual, and different from those of any one else. Hence it leads men to keep their feelings to themselves, because the avowal of them only causes in others irritation or ridicule. Since, too, they have no certainty of the doctrines they profess, they do but feel that they *ought* to believe them, and they try to believe them, and they nurse the offspring of their reason, as a sickly child, bringing it out of doors only on fine days. They feel very clear and quite satisfied, while they are very still; but if they turn about their head, or change their posture ever so little, the vision of the Unseen, like a mirage, is gone from them. So they keep the exhibition of their faith for high days and great occasions, when it comes forth with sufficient pomp and gravity of language, and ceremonial of manner. Truths slowly totter out with Scripture texts at their elbow, as unable to walk alone. Moreover, Protestants know, if such and such things *be* true, what *ought* to be the voice, the tone, the gesture, and the carriage attendant upon them; thus reason, which is the substance of their faith, supplies also the rubrics, as I may call them, of their behaviour. This, some of you, my brethren, call reverence; though I am obliged to say, it is as much a mannerism, and an unpleasant mannerism, as that of the Evangelical party, which they have hitherto condemned. They condemn Catholics, because, however religious they may be, they are natural, unaffected, easy and cheerful, in their mention of sacred things; and they think themselves never so real as when they are especially solemn.

VIII.

And now, my brethren, I will only observe, in conclusion, how merciful a providence it has been that faith and love are separable, as the Catholic creed teaches. I suppose it

might have been, as Luther said it is, had God so willed it—faith and love might have been so intimately one, that the abandonment of the latter was the forfeiture of the former. Now did sin not only throw the soul out of God's favour, but at once empty it of every supernatural principle, we should see in Catholics, what is, alas! so common among Protestants, souls brought back to a sense of guilt, frightened at their state, yet having no resource, and nothing to build upon. Again and again it happens, that, after committing some offence greater than usual, or being roused after a course of sin, or frightened by sickness, a Protestant wishes to repent; but what is he to fall back upon? whither is he to go? what is he to do? He has to dig and plant his foundation. Every step is to be learned, and all is in the dark; he is to search and labour, and after all for an opinion. And then, supposing him to have made some progress, perhaps he is overcome again by temptation, he falls and all is undone again. His doctrinal views vanish, and it can hardly be said that he believes anything. But the Catholic knows just where he is and what he has to do; no time is lost when compunction comes upon him; but, while his feelings are fresh and keen, he can betake himself to the appointed means of cure. He may be ever falling, but his faith is a continual invitation and persuasive to repent. The poor Protestant adds sin to sin, and his best aspirations come to nothing; the Catholic wipes off his guilt again and again; and thus, even if his repentance does not endure, and he has not strength to persevere, in a certain sense he is never getting worse, but ever beginning afresh. Nor does the apparent easiness of pardon operate as an encouragement to sin; unless indeed, repentance be easy, and the grace of repentance to be expected, when it has already been quenched, or unless we come to consider past repentance to avail, when it is not persevered in.

And, above all, let death come suddenly upon him, and let him have the preparation of a poor hour; what is the

Protestant to do? He has nothing but sights of this world around him; wife and children, and friends, and worldly interests: the Catholic has these also, but the Protestant has nought but these. He may, indeed, in particular cases, have got firm hold of his party's view of justification or regeneration; or it may be, he has a real apprehension of our Lord's divinity, which comes from divine grace. But I am speaking, not of the more serious portion of the community, but of the popular religion; and I wish you to take a man at random in one of our vast towns, and tell me has he any supernatural idea before his mind at all? The minutes hasten on; and, having to learn everything, supposing him desirous of learning, he can practise nothing. His thoughts rise up in some vague desire of mercy, which neither he nor the bystanders can analyze. He asks for some chapter of the Bible to be read to him, but rather as the expression of his horror and bewilderment, than as the token of his faith; and then his intellect becomes clouded, and he dies.

How different is it with the Catholic! He has within him almost a principle of recovery, certainly an instrument of it. He may have spoken lightly of the Almighty, but he has ever believed in Him; he has sung jocose songs about the Blessed Virgin and Saints, and told good stories about the evil spirit, but in levity, not in contempt; he has been angry with his heavenly Patrons when things went ill with him, but with the waywardness of a child who is cross with his parents. Those heavenly Patrons were ever before him, even when he was in the mire of mortal sin, and in the wrath of the Almighty, as lights burning in the firmament of his intellect, though he had no part with them, as he perfectly knew. He has absented himself from his Easter duties years out of number, but he never denied he was a Catholic. He has laughed at priests, and formed rash judgments of them, and slandered them to others, but not as doubting the divinity

of their function and the virtue of their ministrations. He has attended Mass carelessly and heartlessly, but he was ever aware what really was before him, under the veil of material symbols, in that august and adorable action. So, when the news comes to him that he is to die, and he cannot get a priest, and the ray of God's grace pierces his heart, and he yearns after Him whom he has neglected, it is with no inarticulate, confused emotion, which does but oppress him, and which has no means of relief. His thoughts at once take shape and order; they mount up, each in its due place, to the great Objects of faith, which are as surely in his mind as they are in heaven. He addresses himself to his Crucifix; he invokes the Precious Blood or the Five Wounds of his Redeemer; he interests the Blessed Virgin in his behalf; he betakes himself to his patron Saints; he calls his good Angel to his side; he professes his desire of that sacramental absolution which from circumstances he cannot obtain; he exercises himself in acts of faith, hope, charity, contrition, resignation, and other virtues suitable to his extremity. True, he is going into the unseen world; but true also, that that unseen world has already been with him here. True, he is going to a foreign, but not to a strange place; judgment and purgatory are familiar ideas to him, more fully realized within him even than death. He has had a much deeper perception of purgatory, though it be a supernatural object, than of death, though a natural one. The enemy rushes on him, to overthrow the faith on which he is built; but the whole tenor of his past life, his very jesting, and his very oaths, have been overruled, to create in him a habit of faith, girding round and protecting the supernatural principle. And thus even one who has been a bad Catholic may have a hope in his death, to which the most virtuous of Protestants, nay, my brethren, the most correct and most thoughtful among yourselves, however able, or learned, or sagacious—if you have lived not by faith, but by private judgment—are necessarily strangers.

THE SOCIAL STATE OF CATHOLIC COUNTRIES NO PREJUDICE TO THE SANCTITY OF THE CHURCH.

BY CARDINAL NEWMAN.[1]

I.

I HAVE been engaged in many lectures in showing that your place, my brethren, if you own the principles of the movement of 1833, is nowhere else but the Catholic Church. To this you may answer, that, even though I had been unanswerable, I should not have done much, for my argument has, on the whole, been a negative one; that there are difficulties on both sides of the controversy; that I have been enlarging on the Protestant difficulty, but there are now a few Catholic difficulties also; that, to be sure, you are not very happy in the Establishment, but you have serious misgivings whether you would be happier with us. Moreover, you might mention the following objection, in particular, as prominent and very practical, which weighs with you a great deal, and warns you off the ground whither I am trying to lead you. You are much offended, you would say, with the bad state of Catholics abroad, and their uninteresting character everywhere, compared with Pro

[1] Reprinted by permission from Lectures on "Difficulties felt by Anglicans in Catholic Teaching," delivered in 1850.

testants. Those countries, you say, which have retained Catholicism, are notoriously behind the age;—they have not kept up with the march of civilization; they are ignorant, and, in a measure, barbarous; they have the faults of barbarians; they have no self-command; they cannot be trusted. They must be treated as slaves, or they rebel; they emerge out of their superstitions in order to turn infidels. They cannot combine and coalesce in social institutions; they want the very faculty of citizenship. The sword, not the law, is their ruler. They are spectacles of idleness, slovenliness, want of spirit, disorder, dirt, and dishonesty. There must, then, be something in their religion to account for this; it keeps them children, and then, being children, they keep to it. No man in his senses, certainly no English gentleman, would abandon the high station which his country both occupies and bestows on him, in the eyes of man, to make himself the co-religionist of such slaves, and the creature of such a creed.

I propose to make a suggestion in answer to this objection; and, in making it, I shall consider you, my brethren, not as unbelievers, who are careless whether this objection strikes at Christianity or no; nor as Protestants proper, who have no concern about so expressing themselves, as to compromise the first centuries of the Church; but as those who feel that the Catholic Church was in the beginning founded by our Lord and His apostles; again, that the Establishment is not the Catholic Church; that nothing *but* the Church of Rome can be; that, if the Church of Rome is not, then the Catholic Church is not to be found in this age, or in this part of the world; for this is what I have been proving in my preceding lectures. What, then, you are saying comes, in fact, to this: We would rather deny our initial principles, than accept such a development of them as the communion of Rome, viewed as it is; we would rather believe Erastianism, and all its train of consequences, to be from God, than the religion of such countries as France and

Belgium, Spain and Italy. This is what you must mean to say, and nothing short of it.

II.

I simply deny the justice of your argument, my brethren, and, to show you that I am not framing a view for the occasion, and moreover, in order to start with a principle, which, perhaps, you yourselves have before now admitted, I will quote words which I used myself twelve years ago :— "If we were asked what was the object of Christian preaching, teaching, and instruction ; what the office of the Church, considered as the dispenser of the word of God, I suppose we should not all return the same answer. Perhaps we might say that the object of Revelation was to enlighten and enlarge the mind, to make us act by reason, and to expand and strengthen our powers ; or to impart knowledge about religious truth, knowledge being power directly it is given, and enabling us forthwith to think, judge, and act for ourselves ; or to make us good members of the community, loyal subjects, orderly and useful in our station, whatever it be ; or to secure, what otherwise would be hopeless, our leading a religious life ; the reason why persons go wrong, throw themselves away, follow bad courses, and lose their character, being, that they have had no education, that they are ignorant. These and other answers might be given ; some beside, and some short of the mark. It may be useful, then, to consider with what end, with what expectation, we preach, teach, instruct, discuss, bear witness, praise, and blame ; what fruit the Church is right in anticipating as the result of her ministerial labours. St. Paul gives us a reason . . . different from any of those which I have mentioned. He laboured more than all the Apostles. And why ? Not to civilize the world, not to smoothe the

face of society, not to facilitate the movements of civil government, not to spread abroad knowledge, not to cultivate the reason, not for any great worldly object, but 'for the elect's sake.' . . . And such is the office of the Church in every nation where she sojourns; she attempts much; she expects and promises little." [1]

I do not, of course, deny that the Church does a great deal more than she promises: she fulfils a number of secondary ends, and is the means of numberless temporal blessings to any country which receives her. I only say, she is not to be estimated and measured by such effects; and if you think she is, my brethren, then I must rank you with such Erastians as Warburton, who, as I have shown you in a former lecture, considered political convenience to be the test and standard of truth.

I thus begin with a consideration which, you see, I fully recognized before I was a Catholic; and now I proceed to another, which has been forced on me, as a matter of fact and experience, most powerfully ever since I was a Catholic, as it must be forced on every one who is in the communion of the Church; and which, therefore, like the former, has not at all originated in the need, nor is put forth for the occasion to meet your difficulty.

The Church, you know, is in warfare; her life here below is one long battle. But with whom is she fighting? For till we know her enemy we shall not be able to estimate the skill of her tactics, the object of her evolutions, or to the success of her movements. We shall be like civilians, contemplating a field of battle, and seeing much dust, and smoke, and motion, much defiling, charging, and manœuvring, but quite at a loss to tell the meaning of all, or which party is getting the better. And, if we actually mistake the foe, we shall criticize when we should praise, and think that all is a defeat, when every blow is telling. In all under-

[1] "Parochial Sermons," vol. iv.

takings we must ascertain the end proposed before we can predicate their success or failure; and, therefore, before we so freely speak against the state of Catholic countries, and reflect upon the Church herself in consequence, we must have a clear view what it is the Church has proposed to do with them and for them. We have, indeed, a right to blame and dissent from the end which she sets before her; we may quarrel with the mission she professes to have received from above; we may dispense with Scripture, Fathers, and the continuous tradition of eighteen hundred years. That is another matter; then, at least, we have nothing to do with the theological movement which has given occasion to these lectures; then we are not in the way to join the Catholic Church; then we must be met on our own ground; but I am speaking to those who go a great way with me; who admit my principles, who almost admit my conclusion; who are all but ready to submit to the Church, but who are frightened by the present state of Catholic countries;—to such I say, Judge of her fruit by her principles and her object, which you yourselves also admit; not by those of her enemies, which you renounce.

The world believes in the world's ends as the greatest of goods; it wishes society to be governed simply and entirely for the sake of this world. Provided it could gain one little islet in the ocean, one foot upon the coast, if it could cheapen tea by sixpence a pound, or make its flag respected among the Esquimaux or Otaheitans, at the cost of a hundred lives and a hundred souls, it would think it a very good bargain. What does it know of hell? it disbelieves it; it spits upon, it abominates, it curses its very name and notion. Next, as to the devil, it does not believe in him either. We next come to the flesh, and it is free to confess that it does not think there is any great harm in following the instincts of that nature which, perhaps it goes on to say, God has given. How could it be otherwise? who ever heard of the world fighting against the flesh and the devil? Well, then, what is

its notion of the evil? Evil, says the world, is whatever is an offence to me, whatever obscures my majesty, whatever disturbs my peace. Order, tranquillity, popular contentment, plenty, prosperity, advance in arts and sciences, literature, refinement, splendour, this is my millennium, or rather my elysium, my swerga; I acknowledge no whole, no individuality, but my own; the units which compose me are but parts of me; they have no perfection in themselves, no end but in me; in my glory is their bliss and in the hidings of my countenance they come to nought.

III.

Such is the philosophy and practice of the world;—now the Church looks and moves in a simply opposite direction. It contemplates, not the whole, but the parts; not a nation, but the men who form it; not society in the first place, but in the second place, and in the first place individuals; it looks, beyond the outward act, on and into the thought, the motive, the intention, and the will; it looks beyond the world, and detects and moves against the devil, who is sitting in ambush behind it. It has, then, a foe in view, nay, it has a battle-field, to which the world is blind; its proper battle-field is the heart of the individual, and its true foe is Satan.

My dear brethren, do not think I am declaiming in the air, or translating the pages of some old worm-eaten homily; as I have already said, I bear my own testimony to what has been brought home to me most closely and vividly as a matter of fact since I have been a Catholic; viz., that that mighty world-wide Church, like her Divine Author, regards, consults for, labours for the individual soul; she looks at the souls for whom Christ died, and who are made over to her, and her one object, for which everything is sacrificed—ap-

pearances, reputation, worldly triumph—is to acquit herself well of this most awful responsibility. Her one duty is to bring forward the elect to salvation, and to make them as many as she can;—to take offences out of their path, to warn them of sin, to rescue them from evil, to convert them, to teach them, to feed them, to protect them, and to perfect them. O most tender loving Mother, ill-judged by the world, which thinks she is, like itself, always minding the main chance; on the contrary, it is her keen view of things spiritual, and her love for the soul, which hampers her in her negotiations and her measures, on this hard cold earth, which is her place of sojourning! How easy would her course be, at least for a while, could she give up this or that point of faith, or connive at some innovation or irregularity in the administration of the Sacraments! How much would Gregory have gained from Russia could he have abandoned the United Greeks! how secure had Pius been upon his throne, could he have allowed himself to fire on his people!

No, my dear brethren, it is this supernatural sight and supernatural aim, which is the folly and the feebleness of the Church in the eyes of the world, and would be failure but for the Providence of God. The Church overlooks everything in comparison of the immortal soul. Good and evil to her are not lights and shades passing over the surface of society, but living powers, springing from the depths of the heart. Actions in her sight, are not mere outward deeds and words, committed by hand or tongue, and manifested in effects over a range of influence wider or narrower, as the case may be! but they are the thoughts, the desires, the purposes, of the solitary responsible spirit. She knows nothing of space or time, except as secondary to will; she knows no evil but sin, and sin is a something personal, conscious, voluntary; she knows no good but grace, and grace again is something personal, private, special, lodged in the soul of the individual. She has one and one only aim—to purify the heart; she collects who it is who has turned our thoughts from the external

crime to the inward imagination; who said, that "unless our justice abounded more than that of scribes and Pharisees, we should not enter into the kingdom of heaven;" and that "out of the heart proceed evils thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false testimonies, blasphemies. These are the things that defile a man."

Now I would have you take up the sermons of any preacher, or any writer on moral theology, who has a name among Catholics, and see if what I have said is not strictly fulfilled, however little you fancied so before you make trial. Protestants, I say, think that the Church aims at appearance and effect; she must be splendid, and majestic, and influential; fine services, music, lights, vestments, and then again, in her dealings with others, courtesy, smoothness, cunning, dexterity, intrigue, management—these, it seems, are the weapons of the Catholic Church. Well, my brethren, she cannot help succeeding, she cannot help being strong, she cannot help being beautiful; it is her gift; as she moves, the many wonder and adore;—"Et vera incessu patuit Dea." It cannot be otherwise, certainly; but it is not her aim; she goes forth on the one errand, as I have said, of healing the diseases of the soul. Look, I say, into any book of moral theology you will; there is much there which may startle you: you will find principles hard to digest; explanations which seem to you subtle; details which distress you; you will find abundance of what will make excellent matter of attack at Exeter Hall; but you will find from first to last this one idea—(nay, you will find that very matter of attack upon her is occasioned by her keeping it in view; she would be saved the odium, she would not have thus bared her side to the sword, but for her fidelity to it)—the one idea, I say, that sin is the enemy of the soul; and that sin especially consists, not in overt acts, but in the thoughts of the heart.

IV.

This, then, is the point I insist upon, in answer to the objection which you have to-day urged against me. The Church aims, not at making a show, but at doing a work. She regards this world, and all that is in it, as a mere shadow, as dust and ashes, compared with the value of one single soul. She holds that, unless she can, in her own way, do good to souls, it is no use her doing anything; she holds that it were better for sun and moon to drop from heaven, for the earth to fail, and for all the many millions who are upon it to die of starvation in extremest agony, so far as temporal affliction goes, than that one soul, I will not say, should be lost, but should commit one single venial sin, should tell one wilful untruth, though it harmed no one, or steal one poor farthing without excuse. She considers the action of this world and the action of the soul simply incommensurate, viewed in their respective spheres; she would rather save the soul of one single wild bandit of Calabria, or whining beggar of Palermo, than draw a hundred lines of railroad through the length and breadth of Italy, or carry out a sanitary reform, in its fullest details, in every city of Sicily, except so far as these great national works tended to some spiritual good beyond them.

Such is the Church, O ye men of the world, and now you know her. Such she is, such she will be, and though she aims at your good, it is in her own way,—and if you oppose her, she defies you. She has her mission, and do it she will, whether she be in rags, or in fine linen; whether with awkward or with refined carriage; whether by means of uncultivated intellects, or with the grace of accomplishments. Not that, in fact, she is not the source of numberless temporal and moral blessings to you also; the history of ages testifies it; but she makes no promises; she is sent to

seek the lost;—that is her first object, and she will fulfil it, whatever comes of it.

And now, in saying this, I think I have gone a great way towards suggesting one main solution of the difficulty which I proposed to consider. The question was this:—How is it, that at this time Catholic countries happen to be behind Protestants in civilization? In answer, I do not at all determine how far the fact is so, or what explanation there may be of the appearance of it; but anyhow the fact, granting it exists, is surely no objection to Catholicism, unless Catholicism has professed, or ought to have professed, directly to promote mere civilization;—on the other hand, it has a work of its own, and this work is, first, *different* from that of the world; next, *difficult of attainment*, compared with that of the world; and, lastly, *secret* from the world in its details and consequences. If, then, Spain or Italy be deficient in secular progress, if the national mind in those countries be but partially formed, if it be unable to develop into civil institutions, if it have no moral instinct of deference to a policeman, if the national finances be in disorder, if the people be excitable, and open to deception from political pretenders, if it know little or nothing of arts, sciences, and literature; I repeat, of course, I do not admit all this, except hypothetically, because it is difficult to draw the line between what is true in it and what is not;—then all I can say, is, that it is not wonderful that civil governments, which profess certain objects, should succeed better than the Church, which does not. Not till the State is blamed for not making saints, may it fairly be laid to the fault of the Church that she cannot invent a steam-engine or construct a tariff. It is, in truth, merely because she has often done so much more than she professes, it is really in consequence of her very exuberance of benefit to the world, that the world is disappointed that she does not display that exuberance always,

—like some hangers-on of the great, who come at length to think they have a claim on their bounty.

V.

Now, let me try to bring out what I mean more in detail; and, in doing so, I hope to be pardoned, my brethren, if my language be now and then of a more directly religious cast than I would willingly admit into disquisitions such as the present; though, speaking, as I do, in a place set apart for religious purposes, I am not perhaps called upon to apologize.

In religious language, then, the one object of the Church, to which every other object is second, is that of reconciling the soul to God. She cannot disguise from herself, that, with whatever advantages her children commence their course, in spite of their baptism, in spite of their most careful education and training, still the great multitude of them require her present and continual succour to keep them or rescue them from a state of mortal sin. Taking human nature as it is, she knows well, that, left to themselves, they would relapse into the state of those who are not Catholics, whatever latent principle of truth and goodness might remain in them, and whatever consequent hope there might be of a future revival. They may be full of ability and energy, they may be men of genius, men of literature and taste, poets and painters, musicians and architects; they may be statesmen or soldiers; they may be in professions or in trade; they may be skilled in the mechanical arts; they may be a hard-working, money-making community; they may have great political influence; they may pour out a flood of population on every side; they may have a talent for colonization; or, on the other hand, they may be members of a country once glorious, whose

day is passed; where luxury, or civil discord, or want of mental force, or other more subtle cause, is the insuperable bar in the way of any national demonstration; or they may be half reclaimed from barbarism; or they may be a simple rural population; they may be in the cold north, or the beautiful south; but, whatever and wherever they are, the Church knows well, that those vast masses of population, as viewed in the individual units of which they are composed, are in a state of continual lapse from the Centre of sanctity and love, ever falling under His displeasure, and tending to a state of habitual alienation from Him. Her one work towards these many millions is, year after year, day after day, to be raising them out of the mire, and when they sink again to raise them again, and so to keep them afloat, as she best may, on the surface of that stream, which is carrying them down to eternity. Of course, through God's mercy, there are numbers who are exceptions to this statement, who are living in obedience and peace, or going on to perfection; but the word of Christ, "Many are called, few are chosen," is fulfilled in any extensive field of operation which the Church is called to superintend. Her one object, through her ten thousand organs, by preachers and by confessors, by parish priests and by religious communities, in missions and in retreats, at Christmas and at Easter, by fasts and by feasts, by confraternities and by pilgrimages, by devotions and by indulgences, is this unwearied, ever-patient reconciliation of the soul to God and obliteration of sin. Thus, in the words of Scripture, most emphatically, she knows nought else but "Jesus Christ and Him crucified." It is her ordinary toil, into which her other labours resolve themselves, or towards which they are directed. Does she send out her missionaries? Does she summon her doctors? Does she enlarge or diversify her worship? Does she multiply her religious bodies? It is all to gain souls to Christ. And if she encourages secular enterprises, studies, or pursuits, as she does, or the arts of civilization generally,

it is either from their indirect bearing upon her great object, or from the spontaneous energy which great ideas exert, and the irresistible influence which they exercise, in matters and in provinces not really their own.

Moreover, as sins are of unequal gravity in God's judgment, though all of whatever kind are offensive to Him, and incur their measure of punishment, the Church's great object is to discriminate between sin and sin, and to secure in individuals that renunciation of evil, which is implied in the idea of a substantial and unfeigned conversion. She has no warrant, and she has no encouragement, to enforce upon men in general more than those habits of virtue, the absence of which would be tantamount to their separation from God; and she thinks she has done a great deal, and exults in her success, does she proceed so far; and she bears as she may, what remains still to be done, in the conviction that, did she attempt more, she might lose all. There are sins which are simply incompatible with contrition and absolution under any circumstances; there are others which are disorders and disfigurements of the soul. She exhorts men against the second, she directs her efforts against the first.

Now here at once the Church and the world part company; for the world, too, as is necessary, has its scale of offences as well as the Church; but, referring them to a contrary object, it classifies them on quite a contrary principle; so that what is heinous in the world is often regarded patiently by the Church, and what is horrible and ruinous in the judgment of the Church may fail to exclude a man from the best society of the world. And, this being so, when the world contemplates the training of the Church and its result, it cannot, from the nature of the case, if for no other reason, avoid thinking very contemptuously of fruits, which are so different from those which it makes the standard and token of moral excellence in its own code of right and wrong.

VI.

I may say the Church aims at three special virtues, as reconciling and uniting the soul to its Maker;—faith, purity, and charity; for two of which the world cares little or nothing. The world, on the other hand, puts in the foremost place, in some states of society, certain heroic qualities; in others, certain virtues of a political or mercantile character. In ruder ages, it is personal courage, strength of purpose, magnanimity; in more civilized, honesty, fairness, honour, truth, and benevolence:—virtues, all of which, of course, the teaching of the Church comprehends, all of which she expects in their degree in all her consistent children, and all of which she exacts in their fulness in her saints: but which, after all, most beautiful as they are, admit of being the fruit of nature as well as of grace; which do not necessarily imply grace at all; which do not reach so far as to sanctity, or unite the soul by any supernatural process to the source of supernatural perfection and supernatural blessedness. Again, as I have already said, the Church contemplates virtue and vice in their first elements, as conceived and existing in thought, desire, and will, and holds that the one or the other may be as complete and mature, without passing forth from the home of the secret heart, as if it had ranged forth in profession and in deed all over the earth. Thus, at first sight, she seems to ignore bodies politic, and society, and temporal interests: whereas the world, on the contrary, talks of religion as being a matter of such private concern, so personal, so sacred, that it has no opinion at all about it: it praises public men, if they are useful to itself, but simply ridicules inquiry into their motives, thinks it impertinent in others to attempt it, and out of taste in themselves to invite it. All public men it considers to be pretty much the same at bottom; but what matter is that to it, if they do its work?

It offers high pay, and it expects faithful service; but as to its agents, overseers, men of business, operatives, journeymen, figure-servants, and labourers, what they are personally, what are their principles and aims, what their creed, what their conversation; where they live, how they spend their leisure time, whither they are going, how they die,—I am stating a simple matter of fact, I am not here praising or blaming, I am but contrasting,—I say, all questions implying the existence of the soul, are as much beyond the circuit of the world's imagination, as they are intimately and primarily present to the apprehension of the Church.

The Church, then, considers the momentary, fleeting act of the will, in the three subject matters I have mentioned, to be capable of guiltiness of the deadliest character, or of the most efficacious and triumphant merit. Moreover, she holds that a soul laden with the most enormous offence in deed as well as thought, a savage tyrant, who delighted in cruelty, an habitual adulterer, a murderer, a blasphemer, who has scoffed at religion through a long life, and corrupted every soul which he could bring within his influence, who has loathed the Sacred Name, and cursed his Saviour,—that such a man can, under circumstances, in a moment, by one thought of the heart, by one true act of contrition, reconcile himself to Almighty God (through His secret grace), without Sacrament, without priest, and be as clean, and fair, and lovely, as if he had never sinned. Again, she considers that in a moment also, with eyes shut and arms folded, a man may cut himself off from the Almighty by a deliberate act of the will, and cast himself into perdition. With the world it is the reverse; a member of society may go as near the line of evil, as the world draws it, as he will; but, till he has passed it, he is safe. Again, when he has once transgressed it, recovery is impossible; let honour of man or woman be sullied, and to restore its splendour is simply to undo the past; it is impossible.

Such being the extreme difference between the Church

and the world, both as to the measure and the scale of moral good and evil, we may be prepared for those vast difference in matters of detail, which I hardly like to mention, lest they should be out of keeping with the gravity of the subject, as contemplated in its broad principle. For instance, the Church pronounces the momentary wish, if conscious and deliberate, that another should be struck down dead, or suffer any other grievous misfortune, as a blacker sin than a passionate, unpremeditated attempt on the life of the Sovereign. She considers direct, unequivocal consent, though as quick as thought, to a single unchaste desire as indefinitely more heinous than any lie which can possibly be fancied, that is, when that lie is viewed, of course, in itself, and apart from its causes, motives, and consequences. Take a mere beggar-woman, lazy, ragged, and filthy, and not over-scrupulous of truth—I do not say she has arrived at perfection—but if she is chaste, and sober, and cheerful, and goes to her religious duties (and I am supposing not at all an impossible case), she will, in the eyes of the Church, have a prospect of heaven, which is quite closed and refused to the State's pattern-man, the just, the upright, the generous, the honourable, the conscientious, if he be all this, not from a supernatural power—I do not determine whether this is likely to be the fact, but I am contrasting views and principles—not from a supernatural power, but from mere natural virtue. Polished, delicate-minded ladies, with little of temptation around them, and no self-denial to practice, in spite of their refinement and taste, if they be nothing more, are objects of less interest to her than many a poor outcast who sins, repents, and is with difficulty kept just within the territory of grace. Again, excess in drinking is one of the world's most disgraceful offences; odious it ever is in the eyes of the Church, but if it does not proceed to the loss of reason, she thinks it a far less sin than one deliberate act of detraction, though the matter of it be truth. And again, not

unfrequently does a priest hear a confession of thefts, which he knows would sentence the penitent to transportation if brought into a court of justice, but which he knows, too, in the judgment of the Church, might be pardoned on the man's private contrition, without any confession at all. Once more, the State has the guardianship of property, as the Church is the guardian of the faith:—in the Middle Ages, it is often objected, the Church put to death for heresy; well but, on the other hand, even in recent times, the State has put to death for forgery, nay, I suppose, for sheep-stealing. How distinct must be the measure of crime in Church and in State, when so heterogeneous is the rule of punishment in the one and in the other!

My brethren, you may think it impolitic in me thus candidly to state what may be so strange in the eyes of the world;—but not so, my dear brethren, just the contrary. The world already knows quite enough of our difference of judgment from it on the whole; it knows that difference also in its results; but it does not know that it is based on principle; it taunts the Church with that difference, as if nothing could be said for her,—as if it were not, as it is, a mere question of a balance of evils,—as if the Church had nothing to show for herself, were simply ashamed of her evident helplessness, and pleaded guilty to the charge of her inferiority to the world in the moral effects of her teaching. The world points to the children of the Church, and asks if she acknowledges them as her own. It dreams not that this contrast arises out of a difference of principle, and that she claims to act upon a principle higher than the world's. Principle is always respectable; even a bad man is more respected, though he may be more hated, if he owns and justifies his actions, than if he is wicked by accident; now the Church professes to judge after the judgment of the Almighty; and it cannot be imprudent or impolitical to bring this out clearly and boldly. His judgment is not as man's: "I judge not according to the look of

man," He says, "for man seeth those things which appear. but the Lord beholdeth the heart." The Church aims at realities, the world at decencies; she dispenses with a complete work, so she can but make a thorough one. Provided she can do for the soul what is necessary, if she can but pull the brands out of the burning, if she can but extract the poisonous root which is the death of the soul, and expel the disease, she is content, though she leaves in it lesser maladies, little as she sympathises with them.

VII.

Now, were it to my present purpose to attack the principles and proceedings of the world, of course it would be obvious for me to retort upon the cold, cruel, selfish system, which this supreme worship of comfort, decency, and social order necessarily introduces; to show you how the many are sacrificed to the few, the poor to the wealthy, how an oligarchical monopoly of enjoyment is established far and wide, and the claims of want, and pain, and sorrow, and affliction, and guilt, and misery, are practically forgotten. But I will not have recourse to the commonplaces of controversy when I am on the defensive. All I would say to the world is,—Keep your theories to yourselves, do not inflict them upon the sons of Adam everywhere; do not measure heaven and earth by views which are in a great degree insular, and can never be philosophical and catholic. You do your work, perhaps, in a more business-like way, compared with ourselves, but we are immeasurably more tender and gentle and angelic than you. We come to poor human nature as the angels of God, and you as policemen. Look at your poorhouses, hospitals, and prisons; how perfect are their externals! what skill and ingenuity appear in their structure, economy, and administration! they are as decent, and bright, and calm, as what our Lord seems to

name them,—dead men's sepulchres. Yes! they have all the world can give—all but life; all but a heart. Yes! you can hammer up a coffin, you can plaster a tomb; you are nature's undertakers; you cannot build it a home. You cannot feed it or heal it; it lies, like Lazarus, at your gate, full of sores. You see it gasping and panting with privations and penalties; and you sing to it, you dance to it, you show it your picture-books, you let off your fire-works, you open your menageries. Shallow philosophers! is this mode of going on so winning and persuasive, that we should imitate it?

Look at your conduct towards criminals, and honestly say whether you expect a power which claims to be divine to turn copyist of you? You have the power of life and death committed to you by heaven; and some wretched being is sentenced to fall under it for some deed of treachery and blood. It is a righteous sentence, re-echoed by a whole people; and you have a feeling that the criminal himself ought to concur in it, and sentence himself. There is an universal feeling that he ought to resign himself to your act, and, as it were, take part in it; in other words, there is a sort of instinct among you that he should make confession, and you are not content without his doing so. So far the Church goes along with you. So far, but no farther. To whom is he to confess? To me, says the priest, for he has injured the Almighty. To me, says the world, for he has injured me. Forgetting that the power to sentence is simply from God, and that the sentence, if just, is God's sentence, the world is peremptory that no confession shall be made by the criminal to God, without itself being in the secret. It is right, doubtless, that that criminal should make reparation to man as well as to God; but it is not right that the world should insist on having precedence of its Maker, or should prescribe that its Maker should have no secrets apart from itself, or that no divine ministration should relieve a laden breast without its

meddling in the act. Yet the world rules it, that whatever is said to a minister of religion in religious confidence is its own property. It considers that a clergyman who attends upon the culprit to be its own servant, and by its boards of magistrates, and by its literary organs, it insists on his revealing to its judgment-seat what was uttered before the judgment-seat of God. What wonder, then, if such forlorn wretches, when thus plainly told that the world is their only god, and knowing that they are quitting the presence of that high potentate for ever, steel themselves with obduracy, encounter it with defiance, baffle its curiosity, and inflict on its impatience such poor revenge as is in its power? They come forth into the light, and look up into the face of day for the last time, and, amid the jests and blasphemies of myriads, they pass from a world which they hate into a world which they deny. Small mercies, indeed, has this world shown them, and they make no trial of the mercies of another!

VIII.

O how contrary is the look, the bearing of the Catholic Church to these poor outcasts of mankind! There was a time, when one who denied his Lord was brought to repentance by a glance; and such is the method which His Church teaches to those nations who acknowledge her authority and her sway. The civil magistrate, stern of necessity in his function, and inexorable in his resolve, at her bidding, gladly puts on a paternal countenance, and takes on him an office of mercy towards the victim of his wrath. He infuses the ministry of life into the ministry of death; he afflicts the body for the good of the soul, and converts the penalty of human law into an instrument of everlasting bliss. It is good for human beings to die as infants, before they have known good or evil, if they have

but received the baptism of the Church; but next to these, who are the happiest, who are the safest, for whose departure have we more cause to rejoice, and be thankful, than for theirs, who, if they live on, are so likely to relapse into old habits of sin, but who are taken out of this miserable world in the flower of their contrition, and in the freshness of their preparation;—just at the very moment when they have perfected themselves in good dispositions, and from their heart have put off sin, and have come humbly for pardon, and have received the grace of absolution, and have been fed with the bread of Angels, and thus, amid the prayers of all men, have departed to their Maker and their Judge? I say, "the prayers of all": for O, the difference, in this respect, in the execution of the extreme sentence of the law, between a Catholic State and another! We have all heard of the scene of impiety and profaneness which attends on the execution of a criminal in England; so much so, that benevolent and thoughtful men are perplexed between the evil of privacy and the outrages which publicity occasions. Well, England surpasses Rome in ten thousand matters of this world, but never would the Holy City tolerate an enormity which powerful England cannot hinder. An arch-confraternity was instituted there at the close of the fifteenth century, under the invocation of San Giovanni Decollato, that Holy Baptist, who lost his head by a king's sentence, though an unjust one; and it exercises its pious offices towards condemned criminals even now. When a culprit is to be executed, the night preceeding the fatal day, two priests of the brotherhood, who sometimes happen to be Bishops or persons of high authority in the city, remain with him in prayer, attend him on the scaffold the next morning, and assist him through every step of the terrible ceremonial of which he is the subject. The Blessed Sacrament is exposed in all the churches all over the city, that the faithful may assist a sinner about to make a compulsory appearance before his Judge. The crowd about

the scaffold is occupied in but one thought, whether he has shown signs of contrition. Various reports are in circulation, that he is obdurate, that he has yielded, that he is obdurate still. The women cry out that it is impossible; Jesus and Mary will see to it; they will not believe that it is so; they are sure that he will submit himself to his God before he enters into His presence. However, it is perhaps confirmed that the unhappy man is still wrestling with his pride and hardness of heart; and though he has that illumination of faith which a Catholic cannot but possess, yet he cannot bring himself to hate and abhor sins which, except in their awful consequences, are, as far as their enjoyment, gone from him for ever. He cannot taste again the pleasure of revenge or of forbidden indulgence, yet he cannot get himself to give it up, though the world is passing from him. The excitement of the crowd is at its height; an hour passes; the suspense is intolerable, when the news is brought of a change; that, before the crucifix, in the solitude of his cell, at length, the—unhappy no longer—the happy criminal has subdued himself; has prayed with real self-abasement; has expressed, has felt, a charitable, a tender thought, towards those he has hated; has resigned himself lovingly to his destiny; has blessed the hand that smites him; has supplicated pardon; has confessed with all his heart, and placed himself at the disposal of his Priest, to make such amends as he can make in his last hour to God and man; has even desired to submit here to indignity, to pain, to which he is not sentenced; has taken on himself any length of purgatory hereafter, if thereby he may, through God's mercy, show his sincerity, and his desire of pardon and of gaining the lowest place in the kingdom of heaven. The news comes; it is communicated through the vast multitude all at once; and, I have heard from those who have been present, never shall they forget the instantaneous shout of joy which burst forth from every tongue, and formed itself into one concordant act of thanksgiving, in

acknowledgment of the grace vouchsafed to one so near eternity.

It is not wonderful then to find the holy men, who, from time to time, have done the pious office of preparing such criminals for death, so confident of their salvation. "So well convinced was Father Claver of the eternal happiness of almost all whom he assisted," says this saintly missionary's biographer, "that, speaking once of some persons who had in a bad spirit delivered a criminal into the hands of justice, he said, 'God forgive them; but they have secured the salvation of this man at the probable risk of their own.' Most of the criminals considered it a grace to die in the hands of this holy man. As soon as he spake to them the most savage and indomitable became gentle as lambs; and, in place of their ordinary imprecations, nothing was heard but sighs, and the sound of bloody disciplines, which they took before leaving the prison for execution."

But I must come to an end. I do not consider, my brethren, I have said all that might be said in answer to the difficulty which has come under our consideration; nor have I proposed to do so. Such an undertaking does not fall within the scope of these Lectures; it would be an inquiry into facts. It is enough if I have suggested to you one thought which may most materially invalidate the objection. You tell me, that the political and civil state of Catholic countries is below that of Protestant: I answer, that, even though you prove the fact, you have to prove something besides, if it is to be an argument for your purpose, viz., that the standard of civil prosperity and political aggrandizement is the truest test of grace and the largest measure of salvation.

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A POLISH PEASANT.

If the spirits of evil in this century seem to have combined together to attempt to overthrow the Church of God and to endeavour to weaken in the minds of men the belief in the Incarnation of Our Divine Lord, it is equally true that in this, as in other times, He "has not left Himself without a witness." On several occasions, and in many different countries, Our Blessed Lady has herself appeared to confirm the faith of the wavering, and by the many miracles wrought through her intercession at different shrines has enkindled anew the flame of piety and love in thousands of faithful hearts. The following account of what happened not long ago may be interesting to some of my readers.

In a part of Russian Poland where the laws dealt heavily with the Catholic population, a peasant family lived who were noted for their honest laborious lives and genuine piety. In spite of many trials and vexations, they had flatly refused to have anything to say to the Russian "popes" (or priests) or their schismatic teaching, and had kept to the old faith, in which they were helped and protected by their landlord, himself a confessor for the truth, whose father had died in a Russian prison.

They had one son, a clever, intelligent lad, gifted with that perseverance of character which may be said to ensure success in life.

One day this boy went with his father to plough some of their land, his business being to lead the team of oxen. After a short time the father was summoned home on some business; but told his little son to wait for his return. The boy sat down; and the coming of his father being delayed longer than he expected, he went to sleep. It was just twelve o'clock, *i.e.*, after the *Angelus*, which he had devoutly said according to the universal custom of the Polish peasants.

Whether he fell asleep with thoughts of Our Lady in his heart, I cannot tell. But during this mid-day sleep a beautiful Lady appeared to him, who told him that he was to build a chapel in her honour on a neighbouring hill. The dream was so vivid that the boy woke with a start, and looked about everywhere for the Lady who spoke to him. He described her as radiant with light, and beyond any beauty he had ever conceived. Full of this vision, but yet thinking it was nothing but a dream, he lay down, and, being very weary, fell asleep again. A second time the beautiful Lady appeared to him, repeated her command, and gave him also various details as to how he was to dedicate the altars in the church—one being to her Divine Son and one to herself; and added that he must have a special picture painted for her altar. The whole thing was set before him so clearly that he felt it was more than an ordinary dream or fancy; and when his father came back he hastened to tell him the whole story. The father who

though a good man, was little inclined to believe anything exceptional or out of the way, scolded the boy for his folly, and told him to mind his oxen and not trouble his head about building churches. But the vision remained indelibly fixed in the boy's mind, though he was silent out of deference to his father.

When he got home he poured out his heart to his mother, who was a woman of lively faith and genuine piety. After listening to him attentively, she advised him to say nothing about it to any one but his confessor; but to endeavour by increased fervour to merit the favour which Our Lady apparently destined for him in the future.

"If this dream be not from God, my child," she added, "it will come to nothing. But if it be His will that you should accomplish this great work, He will make the way clear to you by-and-by. In the meantime, the faithful practice of your daily duties will be the best preparation you can make for the accomplishment of Our Lady's wishes."

The boy followed his mother's advice, and every day increased in piety and goodness, and especially in devotion to the Mother of God.

After a few years his parents died, when he took a wife like-minded to himself, and of the same earnest religious nature. Never was union more happy or more holy. They had between them about seventeen acres of land, which they cultivated themselves, living frugally and simply. God did not give them any children, and they felt that it was His wish that they should put by all they could for the purpose which we have men-

tioned, which was one of the first things the young man confided to his wife after his marriage. She entered into the idea heart and soul, and by her economy and good management they were soon able to save a considerable sum—he from the produce of his land, and she from her poultry and spinning.

After some years spent in this way they agreed to open their box and see what amount they had gathered together. They did so, and found to their astonishment that it amounted to 70,000 roubles. What will not thrift and self-denial effect?

But now came the great difficulty. How could a simple peasant, utterly ignorant of any business save his own, set about building a church? and that in Russia, with persecution raging around them, and their sole protector, Count L——, exiled to Siberia!

After many prayers and communions and fervent invocations to Our Lady, Ivan (for that was his name) determined to go to the chief town of the province in the Government of S——, and ask leave to build the chapel. With great difficulty he obtained admittance to the Governor, who, of course, would not hear of it, and ridiculed the proposal as sheer madness. Finally he said to him:—

"If you want this extraordinary permission you must go to Warsaw."

Nothing daunted, Ivan set off for Warsaw, and, strangely enough, obtained an audience of the Governor-General. This functionary was kinder to him than the Governor of his own province had been, but told him that he could not give leave for the building of any fresh

Catholic chapel in Poland, and that he could only obtain this permission at St. Petersburg. This he naturally thought would entirely shelve the question. But he did not know the strength of faith.

Ivan at once made up his mind to go to St. Petersburg, and, after a wearisome journey, arrived there entirely unprotected, humanly speaking, and not knowing one word of the Russian language. Yet he persevered, and with incredible difficulty made his way at last to the office of the Minister for Public Worship, who fortunately understood Polish. To him he presented his petition for leave to build this wayside chapel. But the Minister replied that all wayside chapels or shrines had been for some little time forbidden in Poland, only churches being permitted. Ivan then boldly asked for leave to build a church. Astonished at his perseverance, and influenced doubtless by Him who moulds all human wills, the Minister granted his petition, but told him that he must submit the plans to the authorities in Warsaw. Overjoyed at his success, which was contrary to all human expectation, he returned to Poland, and sought out an architect who had been recommended to him both as clever in his profession and as a good Christian. The architect was very much interested in the story, and drew out a careful plan according to the sum he had in hand, including the interior fittings. To his bitter disappointment, however, these plans for some absurd reason were not accepted in Warsaw. Evidently, the object of the authorities was to put a stop to the whole thing. But Ivan felt he had gone too far now to go back or be

deterred by any obstacle. He determined to return again to St. Petersburg; knocked once more at the Minister's door, showed his plans, and actually obtained the Imperial leave!

He flattered himself now that his troubles were over; but his faith and perseverance were to be still further tried. The Minister told him that, of course, he must communicate with the Catholic Bishop of his diocese. This he at once undertook to do, and joyfully returned to Poland, anticipating no further difficulty. What was his dismay when, on going to the Bishop, he flatly refused his consent! This unexpected opposition from a quarter where he hoped for cordial support and sympathy nearly overwhelmed even a courage like his. At last, by the intervention of the parish priest, the whole history of Ivan's faith and struggles to accomplish what he considered were Our Lady's commands was brought to the Bishop's ears, and Ivan, in consequence, was again sent for to the palace. The Bishop could not help being greatly struck at the faith and energy of this simple peasant; but he represented to him what grave difficulties there were in the way. The hill where he proposed to build his church was a lonely spot far removed from any parish or population. Who was to serve the church when completed? and who would guarantee the necessary repairs? or the expenses required for Divine worship?

Finally, Ivan agreed that 15,000 of his hardly earned roubles should be set aside for the maintenance of the priest and the services of the church. This and the heavy expenses consequent on his manifold journeys to

St. Petersburg and Warsaw had reduced his 70,000 roubles to 50,000. This, however, was sufficient for the erection of the church, but not for any internal fittings or decoration. Ivan was determined that no part of Our Lady's wishes should be left unfulfilled; but how was this to be done? He and his wife had reduced themselves to positive poverty in their efforts to carry out their plan, and it seemed hard that, on the eve of its fulfilment, they should again be stopped for want of means to fit up the church, and especially to obtain the pictures for the altar which Our Lady had mentioned.

One day a person mentioned in Ivan's presence a society in Warsaw called after St. Luke, where young ladies of good family paint and work for poor churches. At once he determined to go and try whether he could not obtain what he so earnestly needed from this society. He arrived in Warsaw accordingly, and wandered up and down the streets, wondering where he could find this institution. At last, according to his usual practice, he went into a church to pray for light and guidance; and on coming out he was inspired to ask the question of a young lady whom he met in the street. She was just recovering from a severe illness and taking her first walk, leaning on the arm of her sister. She happened to be the daughter of the founder of this very society, Count L——, and gladly directed him to the house, and pointed out the door.

On her return home, to her great surprise, she found this same peasant seated in her father's own room; and the Count said to her:—

"Mary, now we have found the church for which you will have to paint the picture of Our Lady which you have promised her!"

The facts were these: His daughter Mary had been very dangerously ill with typhus fever, and at last inflammation of the lungs set in, which confined her to her bed for three months, and left her so weak that her life was despaired of, and she made every preparation for death. Then the whole family determined to make a novena of prayers to Our Lady. Mary drank the Lourdes water, and made a vow that, if she recovered, she would paint a large picture of Our Lady for the poorest church in Poland. Contrary to the expectation of all the doctors, she began to recover from the moment the vow was made; and now she was considered convalescent, and had that very day taken her first walk. She had a great and decided talent for oil-painting, and that very morning had been speaking of her vow and planning her new picture.

It turned out that Count L—— had been in the rooms of St. Luke's Society at the moment when Ivan came in; and, astonished that a peasant should be thinking of ordering three altar-pictures, questioned him on the subject, and heard his whole history. Finding that he had spent all his money on the church, the Count at once proposed that his daughter should undertake the promised picture of Our Lady. The story got wind; other offers of help followed, and very soon Ivan and his holy wife had the joy of seeing their church completed, and the wished-for pictures in their places above the altars.

We need not describe their thankfulness and happiness on the day of consecration; nor how the sneers of their neighbours were silenced when the whole history of the church and its founder was revealed by the Bishop in the sermon he preached on the occasion. The Bishop pointed out what wonders piety, united with thrift and perseverance, can effect, when a man acts in simple faith and in obedience to a holy inspiration.

The peasant and his wife are still alive. Everything has prospered in their home, and it seems as if Our Lady had determined to restore to them all that they had so ungrudgingly offered in her service. A village has now sprung up, and a Religious Order has been established near the church; so that day and night the praises of Our Lord and His Blessed Mother are sung on that formerly lonely hill. The "boy's dream" has become a reality, and a source of blessing to countless souls.

VICTORIA RATSARAIBA.

Those among my readers who were interested in an earlier volume of *Wayside Tales* will doubtless remember the story of Victoria, the daughter-in-law of the Prime Minister of Madagascar. I am about to talk to you to-day of another Victoria, whose conversion was as extraordinary, and whose piety and goodness made her name a household word throughout the island.

The daughter of a rich and noble pagan house, brought up in every luxury, and the idol of her family, she was married, when very young, to a man bearing the title of *Impitandrina*—that is, of Chief, or Superior, of the great Methodist temple in Ambohimalaza, where her pride and love of luxury found full vent. Every Sunday the poor Catholics, who went to Mass in a humble little shed on the top of the hill, saw this grand lady being carried to church in a beautiful litter (called a *filanzana*) by her slaves, gorgeously dressed, and surrounded by a choir of male and female singers, according to the custom of the country for people of high rank. Her nieces and adopted children followed in her train. At the first sound of the music, every one ran out of their houses to

see her pass; while those who were near the church made way for her with the utmost respect, and prostrated themselves before her. Who would ever have imagined that this proud and beautiful woman, who considered all the world as dirt under her feet, would have willingly renounced all this pomp and show, and chosen to be a poor and humble worshipper in the miserable little building which was all that the Catholics could call their own? Yet so it was; and we see this miracle repeated day after day, thank God, in our own land, where neither men nor women are ashamed to follow their honest convictions, at whatever cost.

Victoria's husband died a few years after her marriage, and she was left a widow. In spite of her luxurious bringing-up, hers was a straightforward and generous nature—always ready to make any sacrifices for others. Our Lord, who had followed her with the eyes of His mercy and love, sent her a long and dangerous illness, which became the turning-point in her life. Among her personal attendants was a Catholic woman, who was very much devoted to her mistress; and one day, when Victoria seemed worse both in body and mind than usual, the faithful slave asked her if she would not like to see the "White Father," who was considered so wonderful among the people for the cure of diseases.

Victoria consented; the priest came, and, by degrees, so completely won her confidence and esteem, that she opened her whole heart to him, and told him all her difficulties with the simplicity and earnestness of her character. These difficulties were easily explained, and at last she became thoroughly convinced of the truth of

the Catholic faith, and determined to embrace it, no matter what sacrifice might be entailed.

One may easily imagine the indignation of the Methodists and other Protestant sects, and especially of her own family. But Our Lord had called her; and, having once made up her mind, her decision was irrevocable, and all their arguments were in vain. She had promised that no obstacles should stand in the way, and she kept her word. Nothing could be more edifying than her preparation for Baptism. Although still only a catechumen, she never failed assisting daily at the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass, no matter how inconvenient might be the hour or how great the distance. Her devotion to the Blessed Sacrament was unbounded. When once she had understood that tremendous Mystery, she was never weary of her hour of adoration. If the good Father was obliged to go and say Mass at a distant mission, Victoria would rise earlier and hasten there even before he arrived, so as not to lose the Holy Sacrifice a single morning. At other times she would go to the capital, Tananarivo, and there take part in all the festivals of the Church, interesting herself in every good work, and sharing in all practices of devotion. She bought a small house adjoining the Sisters of St. Joseph, so as to be able to come into town when she liked for these great functions, without returning at night. Her family hoped that this exceptional fervour would wear itself out; but, on the contrary, it only increased.

At last they resolved to combine together, and to try to compel her to marry again, with an ulterior object which may be easily understood; but she resisted all their

efforts. In vain the noblest alliances in the country were proposed to her, many assuring her that they would not interfere with her religion, and only wished to ensure her earthly happiness. Victoria remained firm. She was determined not to marry again, so as to devote herself altogether to the service of God and His poor. At the head of a great house, and with an immense number of servants and dependants around her—as is the custom of the country—she found a wide field for her charity and zeal. She watched over them all with truly maternal solicitude, winning many of them over to the faith by her good example, caring for them personally in sickness, and devoting herself to their instruction with a patience and sweetness which used to astonish all who knew her. What a joy it was to her when her efforts were crowned with success, and one or other had to be prepared for Baptism and First Communion! On one occasion twelve of her slaves were received at once, and she made them a great feast and served them herself, to the amazement of the people, who are entirely unaccustomed to such humility and charity on the part of their superiors. But in truth, Victoria might serve as an example to Christian women in the most civilized countries.

Another thing which her slaves remarked with astonishment was her simplicity in dress. Before she became a Catholic she would spend hours in having her hair perfumed and dressed in a hundred different ways, according to the fashion of great ladies in Madagascar. After her conversion she grudged every moment thus wasted—the very simplest head-dress pleased her most;

and it was only on grand occasions that she consented to appear in beautiful dresses, more out of consideration for her family and not to discredit her religion than for any other cause.

On great feasts, like Christmas and Easter, she would give banquets to all her slaves and to the poor Christians around her, serving them herself, and mixing with the servants so that she might not be recognized. One of the Fathers found her thus one day, and reproached her for doing so much when she was still fasting, as he feared. She replied, smiling:—

"Don't think of me. I have taken very good care of myself!"

He discovered that she had simply swallowed a little rice boiled in water, while she was heaping the plates of her guests with poultry, beef, cakes, fruits, and every possible delicacy.

But her charity was not limited to her own family, or to people of her own parish; every want, every sorrow, found in her a sympathizer and, as far as she could, a liberal benefactor. The Sisters of St. Joseph speak still with tears of the almost superhuman efforts she made to obtain for them some land, which was urgently wanted for their schools, and which the intrigues of the London City Missionaries had always prevented, until, by indefatigable energy and perseverance, Victoria had extracted the permission from the authorities at Tananarivo. She contributed largely also to the purchase-money, and obtained a garden for the Sisters, so that they might have greater quiet and fresh air. She interested herself with equal zeal in the

amelioration of the condition of the lepers, of whom there were many, unhappily, in Madagascar; and also of the prisoners in the public gaols, where radical reforms were brought about by her representations. What cannot a woman do, animated with such burning charity as hers?

One of her most important works, however, was in connection with the schools. When the new law of the 29th March, 1881, appeared, rendering education compulsory throughout the island, all children were to have their names inscribed in the registers of each town and village. The Government did not care if they were entered as Protestants or Catholics; but, once registered, they were not allowed to change their school. It became, in fact, a measure of Protestant propagandism under the pretence of education: for every effort was made by the sects to compel the parents to inscribe the names of their children in their schools; bribery, withdrawal of employment, even torture and personal violence, were resorted to on many occasions, and, unhappily, very often with success. Victoria, whose intelligence was fully equal to the occasion, threw herself into this work with the greatest zeal, and spared no effort, by rousing the consciences of the parents, and explaining to them clearly the danger to which their children's faith was exposed, to secure that the registers should not be tampered with, and that the Catholic schools should not be forcibly deprived of their scholars. Would that Englishwomen, at this moment, would show as much zeal as this poor native princess—whom most people

would look upon as little better than a savage—in saving Catholic children from workhouse and board schools!

But her superhuman exertions in this matter exhausted her remaining strength. A disease, of which she had long borne the seeds, developed itself with fearful rapidity. She never had any illusions as to her state, and prepared for death with the greatest diligence. When the priest came to give her Extreme Unction, she never ceased repeating, with tears, the most fervent acts of contrition in presence of her whole family; and, during the few remaining days of her life, ejaculatory prayers, and the Acts of Faith, Hope, and Charity which she was continually repeating, appeared to be her greatest consolation. She seemed towards the last to be all on fire with the love of God, which greatly impressed her pagan relations; and on the 18th of July she gave up her pure soul to God, to the despair of her family and dependants, and of the poor around her home.

She had left directions in her will that her funeral should be as simple as possible, and that the rich stuffs which generally are employed in Madagascar to cover the bodies of the upper classes should be dispensed with, and the money they would have cost be employed in clothing the needy. But in this respect the love of her people prevented her wishes from being obeyed.

When the day of the funeral arrived, to the surprise of every one, her body was found perfectly fresh and supple, and as if she were only asleep; while, instead of the fœtid odour of death, a delicious perfume was

emitted from her remains. The superstitious pagans exclaimed that the Fathers must have given her some charm to prevent decomposition. They robed her in beautiful stuffs, and carried her to the cathedral under a magnificent canopy, and on an open bier, as coffins are not in use in that country. Rich and poor, nobles and peasants, crowded round, and, after the Mass and prayers, accompanied her body in procession to the family mausoleum. There Father Taix delivered a touching address to the assembled multitudes, dwelling on the charity and virtues of the deceased, and exhorting them to follow her example. May her intercession avail for the Church in Madagascar!

THE HEROIC SISTER.

If it be true that much mischief arises in the world from women—so much that in Italy it has passed into a proverb, when anything goes wrong, "*Dov' è la donna?*" ("Where is the woman?")—it is equally true that, in many cases, they are the saviours of the opposite sex, and that the influence of a really holy Christian woman will make itself felt and become all-powerful when all other means have failed.

The following story was told me by a very holy Religious, whom I used to meet in my visits to the sick in different parts of London; I relate it exactly as he told it to me.

One day, as he was going out on his usual rounds, he was stopped by a message from his Superior, who wished to speak to him. On entering his room his Superior showed him a letter he had just received from a lady in Germany, with whom he had been slightly acquainted many years before. She had married a foreign merchant-captain, who was a very good Catholic; and she had been left a widow a few years before with three children—two sons and a daughter. The sons had come to England in order to get employment, and the object of the lady's letter was to ask the

Superior to send some priest to see one of these sons, who, she feared, was dangerously ill both in body and soul. The address given was in an out-of-the-way part of London; and the poor lady added that it was only on account of her reduced circumstances that she had allowed her boys to go so far away from her, and that she was very anxious and unhappy about them.

The Father took the address, and with some difficulty found the street. The young man was an artist, and the walls of the house were covered with clever paintings and sketches, though the greater portion of them were of a doubtful character. He had plenty of time to study the subjects before him, for there was a long delay before he was admitted to the sick man's room, so that he was able to draw his own conclusions as to his state of mind from the evidence of his works. At last he was allowed to enter, and saw before him what appeared the wreck of a young and handsome man, who was apparently dying of typhus fever. An elder brother was in the room, who was a clerk in a public office. He received the Father coldly enough, and his expression was the reverse of prepossessing.

But if the good Religious was somewhat disheartened at the first sight of the two brothers, he was filled with hope when his eyes fell on the third occupant of the sick-chamber. This was the sister, Gertrude, a girl of about eighteen, who, as he afterwards learned, had hurried over from Germany as soon as she had heard of the dangerous condition of her brother. She stood before him, as he said, "like an angel of purity and goodness" in the midst of her uncongenial surroundings.

In a few minutes the elder brother left the house; and Gertrude, taking the priest for a short time into the next room, after expressing her intense joy at his having come, described all the horrors and difficulties of her position. She said that neither she nor her mother had the slightest idea of the way her brother was living. She found that he had become entangled with a very bad woman, a Protestant, with whom he had been acquainted for some months. But the worst of it was that she could not be driven out of the house, as the artist was poor, the woman was rich, and the apartments had been taken in her name.

It was evident that the poor sister, who was a lady both by birth and education and a fervent Catholic, was suffering a perfect martyrdom at the hands of this creature, who insulted her on every possible occasion, jeered at her religion, and did her utmost to thwart her influence with her brother. But she had not calculated on the strength which faith and love could give. Gertrude was determined that her darling brother's soul should be saved, even if his body should sink under the disease; and she kept her watch day and night, lest this woman should draw near the bed of the dying man.

What added to her difficulty with those around her was her imperfect knowledge of English; but she had succeeded so far as to bring back recollections of his holy home and early instructions to her brother's mind, and by patience and forbearance had managed to prepare him for confession, which he had long neglected. Having in this way put the Father in possession of the case, she took him again into the sick-room, and left

the priest and his patient alone, while she kept watch outside. I will here quote the Father's own words:—

"I found the poor lad had a thoroughly good warm heart, though he was reckless and weak. Before talking to him about his soul, I began to speak of his sister, who had struck me so much by her simple, loving earnestness. This was the key to his heart, and he narrated all she had done for him, and how he should have been lost body and soul without her. By degrees he told me his whole story, how he had got into a bad set soon after he arrived in London, how they had tempted him into every kind of sin and neglect of his religious duties; how, by degrees, bad and impure thoughts had taken possession of him till he could think of nothing else, and the sensual pictures I had seen on his walls were only the natural expression of such a state of mind. Then he came across this woman, who was bold and handsome, and had been one of his models; and by degrees her strong, passionate nature overpowered his weak and timid one, and, as he expressed it, 'the devil came into the house.' But he had a mother and a sister, though far away, loving him and praying for him always, and their prayers were heard. God sent him this grievous sickness, and then came remorse and fear, and almost despair. One day a brother artist came to see him, who was better than the rest, and he implored him to write to his mother, and tell her how ill he was, and that he had no hope in this world or the next.

"This note was accordingly written and despatched, with the result that the poor mother, not being able to

come herself, sent his sister, and wrote to our Fathers, as you know. Thanks to the devoted tenderness and solid instruction given him by this angel sister, I found him well prepared to make the fullest confession of his past life, and to renounce the woman who was causing the loss of his soul. He was very much exhausted when his confession was over, and I became so alarmed about him, that I decided to anoint him at once. The sister was called in, and, in spite of her sorrow, a holy joy came over her face when her brother kissed her and told her he was now at peace and happy. He received the Sacrament of Unction with fervour and full consciousness; but as I had not the Blessed Sacrament with me, his house being out of our parish, I told him I would get leave from the parish priest to bring him the Viaticum the following day. He thanked me with tears, and the sister too. On my way downstairs I again came across the elder brother, and said a few words to him. He was cold and polite, but evidently not at his ease with me; and I felt there was something about him which I could not understand.

"The following morning I went back again as I had promised, and there met the doctor, who told me that an extraordinary change for the better had taken place in the condition of the sick man, that the fever had considerably abated, and that he thought now there was a hope of his recovery. Extreme Unction in this, as in so many other cases, had done its work of cure, added to the peace of mind which had been the result of his confession. I was doubly glad of it, as I did not think it right to bring Our Lord into a house of that kind

without absolute necessity. Day after day I came, and was always met with improved reports; but his sister had evidently some further anxiety on her mind, and was above all most desirous to move her sick brother from the house, which the doctor, however, positively refused to sanction. I was also very much puzzled at the conduct of the elder brother. He could speak English perfectly, but she never turned to him for help or advice, nor did she ever ask his assistance in any matter. She seemed more and more troubled as time went on, and I felt there was a mystery in their history which I could not solve.

"One morning very early she came to our monastery with a letter from her mother, imploring the Superior to lend her a certain sum of money for a few days, and saying that the cheque which she had given to her clerk brother to change for her had been lost, or at any rate she could not get it back from him. The Superior gave her the money, and I, being ill, could not go back to see them for a few days, when to my astonishment I received a letter from Germany, from the mother of the lad, overflowing with gratitude for what she called my extraordinary charity and kindness, and punctually returning the money. She also announced that her invalid son had been brought home safely by his sister, and was not at all the worse for the journey. A little note, enclosed by Gertrude herself, simply stated that circumstances having arisen which made their position unendurable, she had taken it upon herself to convey her brother on board ship in spite of the doctor, and that he had borne the journey very well. She added that

his penitence was only equalled by his fervour, and that she never could sufficiently thank God for His mercy."

So far had the good Religious told his story, when I interrupted him to ask if he had ever discovered the mystery attached to the elder brother. He replied:—

"For a long time we heard nothing of him. The family wrote constantly and freely upon every topic except that one; and, of course, he never came near us. But after several months we received a heartrending letter from Germany, imploring us to go and see him and have pity upon him, for that he was in prison! Then the mystery was explained. The young clerk had taken to gambling and insane speculations, which he had carried to such an extent that he had even gone the length of stealing very largely from his employers, and that systematically and for a long time. The poor sister had found this out when she came to London, and her own poor little money, brought for her dying brother, had gone the way of all the rest. She had screened him as far as she could, and never let me suspect the misery that was preying upon her; but, as I had remarked, she never would receive anything from him, however small. She evidently doubted the source from which it came; and it was her dread of the exposure which she felt sure would follow, and of which she had earnestly warned him, which made her so anxious to remove her sick brother from London at whatever risk.

"I hastened to the prison, and the consternation of the culprit may be imagined when he saw me come into his cell. He had flattered himself that his disgrace and sin would be quite unknown to his family;

but the account of his trial had been copied into a German newspaper, and so his poor broken-hearted mother and sister knew all. This was the crowning blow to his punishment, and I felt deeply for the poor young fellow when I saw him cover his face with his hands and burst into tears. It gave me hope, too, for he was evidently not hardened in guilt as I had feared. Here again the sister had been at work. She had offered up all her sufferings and trials, and life itself, for the salvation of this misguided brother, and it had not been in vain. He became a true penitent, and I had the joy of giving his holy sister a supreme consolation by writing and telling her all that had passed within those prison walls to the soul so dear to her. His penitence was as real and as lasting as his brother's: so that in spite of his crime and the length of his sentence he won the respect and liking of every one connected with the gaol."

Thus the good priest's story ended. The moral of it is, how much may be done by one humble, feeble woman, if she will but make use of the two weapons God has put into her hands—self-sacrifice and prayer! How many "Gertrudes" are there in this sad world, suffering, striving, pleading with Our Lord and His Blessed Mother for their dear ones on earth, who have been led away by temptation and are living in unbelief! Let all such take heart by this true story, and feel confident that no prayer thus offered will be lost, and that Our Lord in His own good time and way will surely grant them their hearts' desire.

A WONDERFUL ESCAPE.

William S—— was the son of a very respectable old man, who was one of the under-gardeners at K——. Both he and his wife were good Catholics, and strove to bring up their boy in the fear and love of God. But William was always a difficult child to manage, headstrong and wilful; and neither kindness nor punishment seemed to have much effect upon him. Through the good conduct and highly respectable character of his father, however, the servants in the big house looked kindly on the lad, who was quick, handy and clever, and the steward took him into the house as a page and to wait in the steward's room. He would have been promoted to be footman had he not developed a great liking for the stables, so that the coachman took him as a groom in the same establishment, where he remained till the death of the master of the house, when, the number of horses being diminished, his services were no longer needed.

The boy was not sorry for the change. He wanted to see more of life than he could in a country place, where he had been kept very strictly, and was, besides, continually under the eye of his father and mother:

and so, though against their wishes, he went up to Liverpool to look for a situation there. He was a fine, well-grown lad, with a good character, and found no difficulty in getting a place in a large wholesale shop to drive a van and an advertising cart. Here his sharpness, and his knowledge of horses and of driving, stood him in good stead.

Unfortunately, the head man in the stables of this warehouse was a thoroughly worthless fellow, and initiated him into every sort of wickedness. He took him to public-houses, taught him to drink, sneered at him for his religious practices till he induced him to give them up, and finally made him a cat's-paw in various small speculations in which he had been in the habit of indulging, and in which, it is needless to say, he took the lion's share. At last he persuaded him to steal a pier-glass, which they had found in a disused warehouse and fancied that no one would miss: this glass was pawned by William at his desire, but the owner found it out. William was the only person in the transaction whom the pawnbroker knew, and though comparatively innocent, he was arrested, and got three months' imprisonment. This disgrace soon came to the ears of his father and mother, who were perfectly broken-hearted at the news.

When his time was up William did not dare go home, but determined to enlist. After a time he was sent to Aldershot, where his regiment was quartered; but he got sick of soldiering and one day deserted. He had nothing but his soldier's clothes, but contrived to pick up another suit by breaking into the saddlery of a

gentleman's house in the neighbourhood—of which he knew the ways—and there found a complete suit of clothes and a good pair of boots, belonging to the coachman, with which he made off. But this robbery cost him dear, for he was detected by these very clothes at a public-house on the way to Basingstoke, arrested on the double charge of desertion and theft, and finally lodged in Winchester Gaol for a twelvemonth. There one of the officials from the Liverpool prison saw and recognized him.

Nevertheless as soon as his sentence was over, he went back to his old haunts, and got a very good place in a large shipbuilding firm. He might now with ease have regained his character, but his habit of drinking led him into expenses which he could not meet, and at last he was tempted to pledge a watch belonging to one of the firm. The pawnbroker felt sure that the watch had been stolen, though William declared it had been given him to pledge by one of the men who worked with him. Whether this were the case or not, the fact was that he was again arrested, though this time only on suspicion.

The sessions were delayed this year, and William, being handy, active, and clean in his work, got into favour with the authorities, who employed him in cleaning and whitewashing and other jobs in the upper landing of the prison where his cell was. He had to go down below to fetch the rubbing-stones for cleaning the pavement, and one day he saw in the yard an iron bar lying, which he took up and contrived to secrete in his clothes and carry to his cell. The prison walls are double. In one corner of the cell was an iron tank for

holding water, let into the thickness of the wall. William found that he could take the screws out of this, and by sharpening the iron of the bar to a point, could work upon the outer wall, and by degrees cut it away from the inside till it came to only half an inch thickness. He did this while the warders were at dinner every day, and also at night, always replacing the tank and white-washing over the screws, so that no sign of its having been moved could be discovered.

At last, everything was ready for William's escape. He had plaited his blanket and counterpane into a strong cord by cutting them in strips, and had also taken the cord which fastened the canvas of his bed. There was a shelf in each of the cells, on which the blankets were placed during the day, rolled up in a particular way; but he contrived to leave enough of his to roll up outside as usual, so as to escape detection.

It was on a Saturday night—the 6th of November—a dark, stormy, windy night. Choosing the moment when no noise could be detected amidst the howling of the wind, William burst through the remaining half-inch of the wall, and fastening the cord to the iron bar—which he had contrived, with incredible pains, to saw in two—he managed to let himself down forty feet into the court below. But in so doing he hurt his back against a projection in the wall, which he had not remarked; and the agony to his spine was such that he thought at first he must lie there, and that he should be unable to move. However, after about an hour he felt less stunned, and proceeded to try and scale the next wall, which was thirty feet high; but being still weak and

stunned, he failed in his endeavours to throw up the iron bar, which he had brought with him, hoping to use it as a grappling iron. Then he heard the steps of the watch, but managed to conceal himself in the angle of the wall, the darkness of the night favouring his escape.

After a time William found a shed in one corner where some repairs were going on, and managed to reach the top of it. From thence it was easier to scale the wall, which he did at last, and dropped down the other thirty feet into the chaplain's garden. He had nothing on but a shirt, and a handkerchief tied round his waist, as he had of course left all his prison clothes behind him, and his cap was in his hand. It was then nine o'clock in the evening. He walked on till he came to a bridge over the railway which was close at hand; and there whom should he see but a policeman and one of the prison officials! He managed, however, to pass them unobserved, they taking him for one of the men working at a brick-kiln close by, who often work in their shirts.

Afraid of going back to Liverpool, William struck across the fields for six or seven miles, till he was thoroughly weak and exhausted, and then luckily came to some farm buildings and cows. Having milked one of the cows into a pail which he found in the byre, he drank the milk, then stole up to a loft of which the door had been left open and concealed himself in the hay, where he had a good sleep. The next day being Sunday, he was not discovered, and remained there till late on Sunday night, when, having again milked one of the cows, he made his way to Preston, where he saw an

empty house marked "To be let or sold," into which he managed to get. Hearing some steps later in the day, however, he got out on the roof, and passing by an attic of the next house, saw lying on a chair a complete suit of clothes. This was a godsend, indeed, for now his escape was comparatively easy. Moreover, in the pocket of the coat he found some money, which enabled him to buy some food of which he was sorely in need. When the coast was clear, he got back into the empty house, and after a time out of it; and hailing a cab, told the man to drive him to Preston Moor Park. This he did; William got out, paid him and then went and got a good dinner, after which he began to reflect as to what he should do in the future. At last he made up his mind to enlist again in the army, and went to the barracks, where so tall and good-looking a man was readily accepted.

In the meantime his photograph, which had been taken in the prison, had been put by the authorities in the *Hue and Cry*, and a reward offered for his capture. William would, however, have escaped had it not been for the unlucky clothes. He gave them, when he got his uniform, to the sergeant's wife, in return for some kindness she had done him. The woman took them to a pawnbroker's, who inquired at once where she had got them, as that very morning the owner of a similar suit had been to his house to ask if any articles of the sort had been brought to him to pledge. The poor woman unsuspectingly answered that they had been given to her by a young soldier who had lately enlisted in her hus-

band's regiment. Inquiries were made, and the result was that William was again arrested, and being found to resemble the photograph in the *Hue and Cry*, was sent back to Liverpool.

This bitter disappointment was, however, the beginning of his conversion; it was, in fact, the hour of God's grace. Condemned for seven years to penal servitude, William would have become desperate but for the soothing, tender ministrations of Father Nugent, who by degrees got him to see the gradual steps by which he had been led on from sin to sin, who brought back to him his childhood's faith, and who induced him at last to accept his punishment as an expiation for his offences against God, even more than against man.

His conversion was sincere and lasting. Under a fresh name he has begun a new life in America, and no one in the fervent Catholic, respectable citizen, and admirable husband and father of to-day, could recognize the wild lad who was the hero in this wonderful escape, and who owes his salvation, body and soul, to the patient devotion of this good priest.

A North-Country Martyr

By DOM BEDE CAMM, O.S.B.

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PREFACE

We earnestly recommend, not only to the faithful of our own Diocese, but also to all English-speaking Catholics, this little book, containing the history of one of our country's martyrs already declared Venerable by the Holy See.

We feel sure that none can read its touching narrative without profit. To none, however, ought it to appeal so forcibly as to the people of our own dear Durham county; in which the Ven. John Ducket so bravely and assiduously laboured to maintain the ancient Faith; and in which he was seized and brought to the unjust trial with which his glorious and holy end began. "His mission," says Bishop Challoner, "was in the Bishopric of Durham," and after being "apprehended between Whissingham and Lenchester" (the old names for Wolsingham and Lanchester), he was "carried to Sunderland" to be brought before the magistrates. May this little volume increase devotion to him, and may the narrative of his saintly life and heroic death for God stir up like faith and zeal in many hearts!

✠ Thomas William,
Bishop of Hexham and Newcastle.

A NORTH-COUNTRY MARTYR

On a bleak hillside, between the modern colliery village of Tow Law and the quiet little old-world town of Wolsingham, stands a tall stone cross, where four roads meet.[1] It is a spot which no Catholic can pass by without emotion, for that unpretending cross marks the place where a holy priest was arrested by Cromwell's Parliamentary soldiers, and carried away to prison and to death. The Catholics of the neighbourhood know it well. Years ago, when the present flourishing mission of Tow Law had no existence, and the fervent Catholics of that place had to go down to Wolsingham for Mass, never would they pass the corner on Redgate Hill without reverently marking the sign of the cross upon the ground at the spot where the roads met.

Thus the tradition had been maintained through generations of persecution, and thus we are now enabled to honour by a more permanent memorial the name and memory of one who gave his life for his northern flock, and cheerfully shed his blood in defence of the old faith taught in Northumbria long ago by Cuthbert and Aidan, Wilfrid and Bede.

John Ducket, who, we may hope, may some day be honoured as the patron saint of Wolsingham and the valley of the Wear, was born at Underwinder, in the parish of Sedbergh in Yorkshire, in the year 1613. The house in which he was born was unfortunately pulled down some thirty years ago, and a farmstead now occupies the site. He came of an old knightly family which had inhabited the

[1] The cross is of polished stone, six feet high, and was erected in 1899. It stands on an elevation at the side of the road. Its erection is due to the zeal and devotion of the Rev. Mother Mary Clare of the Convent of Mercy, Wolsingham.

neighbourhood of Kendal since the time of Richard II. John Ducket of Grayrigg, the founder of the family in the north country, came from Fillingham in Lincolnshire.[1] They were allied to the Layburnes of Skelsmergh and Cunswick, and to many of the oldest families of the North. But since the Reformation the family had received a new lustre from its fidelity to the Faith, and had been decorated with the purple of martyrdom in the person of the Ven. James Ducket of Gilthwaiterigg Manor, near Skelsmergh, who died a glorious death for the Catholic faith in 1602. This holy martyr seems to have been the grandfather of Father John Ducket. He was at any rate a near kinsman. A few words as to his career will therefore not be out of place.

James Ducket had settled in London, where he employed himself in publishing Catholic books, a difficult and dangerous work of charity in those penal times. After suffering many trials for his consistent refusal to attend the Protestant Church service (he spent nine out of the twelve years of his married life in prison), he was accused by a bookbinder named Bullock of having put into circulation several Catholic works. This wretched man was under sentence of death for felony, and hoped to save his life by denouncing his Catholic neighbour. Ducket was seized and thrown into a hideous dungeon in Newgate prison called Limbo, "a dark and dismal hole through which the filth of the city ran with no small stench."[2] It was absolutely dark except when "at one time of the day the sun shined in at two auger holes

[1] He obtained Grayrigg through his marriage with Margery, heiress of William de Windesore, Lord of that manor. His descendants "enjoyed it for twelve generations following, with this peculiar felicity, that none of the issue male, possessors of the family estate, was ever in ward, every ancestor living until his heir was above 21 years of age" (Burn & Nicholson's *Westmoreland*, p. 111). The arms of Ducket are, *sable*, a saltire *argent*.

[2] We quote from the relation of the martyr's son, Dom John Ducket, Prior of the English Carthusians.

upon a white napkin, which he hung up for the purpose. But the damp of the place made this napkin quite black, as it did the rest of his linen; which when his wife received from the keeper, and saw how foul the place had made them, she conceived (as she had reason) that he must needs be ill. To increase her fears, it was told her that another, who was shut up in an adjoining dungeon after him, was already dead, through the filth and horror of the place. Wherefore to ease her mind she made means that she might at least have a sight of him, which was granted her. So that he, having a list [collar] about his neck to bear up his fetters which well loaded him, came up to her smiling with a merry and full countenance, while she with a heavy heart stood weeping, thinking she should have seen in him the picture of a dead man, far from that cheerful countenance he brought with him." We shall see that this joy in suffering for Christ was also a special characteristic of his grandson.

After James Ducket had witnessed a good confession before his judges, he was condemned to a felon's death. The account of his last hours is extremely touching.

"On Monday morning, the day designed for his death, his wife came to speak with him, which she could not without tears. He bid her be of good comfort, and said his death was no more to him than to drink off the caudle which stood there ready for him. 'If I were made,' said he, 'the Queen's secretary or treasurer, you would not weep; do but keep yourself God's servant, and in the unity of God's Church, and I shall be able to do you more good being now to go to the King of kings. . . . For I take it for a great favour from Almighty God, that I am placed among thieves, as He Himself my Lord and Master was.'

"As he was carried towards the place of execution, in the way his wife called for a pint of wine to drink to him. He drank, and desired her to drink to Peter Bullock and freely to forgive him, for he, after all his hopes, was in the self-same

cart carried also to execution. Being come to the place, and both Peter and he standing up in the cart; 'Peter,' said he, 'thou art the cause of my coming hither, as God and thyself knowest, for which I from my heart forgive thee. And that the world and all here may witness that I die in charity with thee'—he kissed him, both having the ropes about their necks.

"Then he said to him, 'Thy life and mine are not long, wilt thou promise me one thing? If thou wilt, speak. Wilt thou die, as I die, a Catholic?'

"Bullock replied he would die as a Christian should do; and so the cart was drawn from under them."

We are now to see how the spirit of this noble martyr descended with his blood to the young priest who was captured on the road from Wolsingham to Durham.

John Ducket was the third son of James Ducket of Underwinder, and Frances Girlington his wife. By his mother he came of a staunch Catholic stock; the Girlingtons of Girlington were a foremost family among the Yorkshire recusants who braved fines and imprisonments, and even death itself, rather than conform to the religion of the State. It was but natural, then, that the lad should be sent out of England in order to assure him a Catholic education. It is true that this was a crime in the eyes of the Government, but it was also penal to have a Catholic tutor at home, and of the two the former alternative was the more satisfactory as well as the less dangerous. John Ducket was accordingly sent at the age of seventeen to the famous old English Seminary at Douay, a college which still flourishes though transferred to English soil, and now at Ushaw is situated close to the scene of John Ducket's missionary labours. Indeed he must often have crossed the hills on which the stately College of St. Cuthbert now stands, in his pastoral visits to the scattered Catholics around Durham.

At Douay, the future martyr was distinguished for his eminent piety, and especially for his zeal for prayer. The

College Diary tells us that so greatly was he given to this holy exercise, that even as a student he would spend whole nights in mental prayer. His humility was equal to his extraordinary piety. Though looked up to by all, he esteemed himself the most miserable of sinners. In September, 1639, he was raised to the sublime dignity of the priesthood, and, as may well be imagined, his fervour redoubled. Instead of being sent on the mission, it was decided that immediately after his ordination he should be one of the first band of students who were to proceed to a course of higher studies in the newly-founded College of Tournay at Paris. This college had been granted by Cardinal Richelieu to Bishop Smith, the Vicar Apostolic of England, for the higher education of the exiled English clergy. Its first president was the pious and learned William Clifford. In a rare French book on our English martyrs,[1] we have a beautiful account of John Ducket's life at Paris, written by one who knew him intimately. He was, as we said, one of the little band of students, seven in number, who formed, so to speak the foundation-stones of the new college. They began in the best possible way, by making a spiritual retreat at St. Lazare, that holy house renowned for the virtues of St. Vincent de Paul its founder, then at the zenith of his fame. We are told the piety and devotion of the young Yorkshireman drew forth the profound admiration of St. Vincent and his companions. The good resolutions he made during this retreat were carried out during the rest of his life with extraordinary fidelity. Humility was ever his distinguishing virtue, and as he advanced in the spiritual life, his humility grew deeper and stronger. He spoke but rarely, and took pleasure in doing the will of others, rather than his own; but the way

[1] *Histoire de la Persécution présente des Catholiques en Angleterre*, par le Sieur de Marsys. 1645 (p. 141-158). The author was an attaché of the French Ambassador in London, and was present at the trial and execution of several of our martyrs. His book is so rare that we know of only two copies in England.

in which he displayed this virtue most strikingly was the joy and delight which he took in performing the lowest and most menial household duties. He used to say, "I am astonished that the superiors allow me to stay on here, for I am of so little use, and only take up the place and eat the bread of others who would be of real service to the cause."

His obedience was perfect; not content with doing the will of his superiors, he delighted in submitting himself to his companions, nay, even to his inferiors. When asked to go somewhere or do something his invariable reply was, "Whatever you please," "Whatever you think best." His charity towards the poor was so great, that he spent the little money he obtained from home almost entirely in alms; he ate and drank but little, and dressed with extreme simplicity, and, what is even a greater mark of perfection, he never meddled in the affairs of others, being accustomed to say, "Why should I interfere in other people's business, when I have enough to do to look after my own?"

We are therefore not surprised to hear that he had a very special devotion for the Blessed Mother of God, in whose honour he was accustomed to say two or three votive Masses every week. He used to spend all his spare time on holidays in the Cathedral of Notre Dame, where he might be seen kneeling absorbed in prayer for two or three hours at a time. His special aim was to perform with all perfection the special duties of his vocation, and he therefore divided his spiritual duties under three heads: mental prayer, to which he devoted much time; the recitation of the Breviary, in which he took great delight; and the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass, which he always celebrated with extraordinary devotion and reverence. He often reminded himself that it was the priest's duty to weep over the sins and watch over the souls of his people, and he used often to say, "*Parce, Domine, parce populo tuo,*" "Spare, O Lord, spare Thy people." To see him pray one would have thought he intended to storm heaven by force, and the constant

exercise of prayer had an effect even on his outward man, giving him a slight stoop when he walked, and even affecting his health. He was always the last to go to bed and the first to get up in the morning, and this in order to get more time for prayer. He spent at least two hours every morning in mental prayer.

He said his Office almost entirely on his knees; and he was wont to declare that the Breviary contained all that was necessary to form an ecclesiastic in science and virtue, for it gave him the essence of the teaching of the Fathers, of the Church, and of Holy Scripture, and was filled with the inspirations of the Holy Ghost.

He was wont to assist at two or three Masses before celebrating his own, and even then if other priests were ready to celebrate he always gave place to them, and insisted on being the last to exercise this august ministry.

After three years thus spent in the college, the time came for him to be sent to the English mission-field. He shrank not from the dangers but from the responsibilities of this difficult and glorious mission. "How shall I, who am nothing and know nothing, and who cannot even direct my own soul aright, find the necessary graces to guide others?" he said. Nevertheless charity and obedience made him willingly consent to undertake the burden which his humility dreaded. "I have taken a vow to go whenever it shall please my superiors to send me, I therefore no longer belong to myself, and though I am too well aware of my unworthiness, it is not me to discuss their reasons; *Ecce me*, Behold I am ready, send me whither you will, *in verbo enim vestro laxabo rete*.[1] He who has watched over me up till now and given me the will to devote myself to His service, will not forsake me till the end; I am His, I am no longer my own; as long as He works with me, I shall do good work where I may be. But pray for me, I entreat you."

Before leaving France and embarking on his perilous

[1] "At your word I will let down the net" (St. Luke v. 5).

mission, our martyr was desirous of consulting some experienced spiritual guide upon his method of prayer, and on the many favours which he had received from God during those long vigils before the altar. His humility made him fear the illusions of the enemy of souls; and so, "not content with having before conferred at Paris with some very spiritual persons, who approved of his way of prayer (though what passed therein betwixt his soul and God was so sublime that they owned it was above their comprehension) for further security he called at Nieuport on purpose to consult his kinsman, the Reverend Father Ducket, son of James Ducket the martyr, and prior of the English Carthusians there, and to put himself under his direction, to the end that he might proceed more safely in the interior way, and avoid the delusions of the enemy to which contemplatives are often exposed. Here he spent about two months in preparing himself by spiritual exercises for the great work of the conversion of souls."

The monastery at Nieuport had taken the place of the old Charterhouse of Sheen and had been founded by Dom Maurice Chauncey, the companion and biographer of those eighteen glorious martyrs of the London Charterhouse who suffered as the first-fruits of the persecution of Henry VIII. Dom John Ducket was worthy alike of the glorious traditions of his house and of the father whose martyrdom we have already recounted. No doubt his young kinsman would have rejoiced to have been able to stay in the holy retreat of "Jesus of Bethlehem" (as the house was called); but duty called him to a sterner field of combat, and henceforth the fœtid prison-house was to be at once his sanctuary and his cell.

He reached England about Christmas, 1643, and at once began his labours in the north. Fixing on Durham as his headquarters, he became the evangelist of all the country around. Unwearied were his labours, unceasing his zeal; and yet his prayer was uninterrupted by the manifold

activities of his life. His labours lasted only a few months, but in a short space he fulfilled a long time, and he was already ripe for heaven.

And so one day he was summoned to Wolsingham to baptize two children. Taking the holy oils and the *Rituale Romanum* with him, he gladly set out on his sacred errand. He was accompanied by two laymen with whose family he lodged. But let us hear him tell the story in his own words.

"I was taken upon the Visitation of Our Lady at 9 or 10 o'clock at night near Wisingame [Wolsingham] Park coming towards Durham homewards. . . . I was taken by soldiers that had the intelligence that I was going to christen two children. They brought me to Sunderland, where I was examined whether I were a priest or no. I replied: 'If I be brought here as a delinquent, and nothing can be laid to my charge, I am free by law.' They committed me to prison, making no doubt of my being a priest by reason of my holy oils and such-like things they found about me. Afterwards I was called again, and being [because] I would not answer directly that I was no priest, they threatened to put fired matches betwixt my fingers till I would confess what I was. But when their threats would not prevail, they sent me to gaol again and put irons on me. About an hour after they called me again. In the meantime they were examining the other two who were taken with me, who when I heard they would be shipped and sent away, seeing it was because I would not confess what I was, and also fearing lest some of the country should come who knew me, whereby the most part there might have suffered but especially those with whom I lived, I confessed myself to be a priest, to free them and the country."

The martyr's conduct reminds us of His Divine Master's, who when He gave Himself up to His foes pleaded for his disciples—"but let these go their way." His charity was indeed rewarded, for after hearing his confession the Commissioners released his companions, who, had they been

discovered to have been our martyr's hosts, would have incurred the death-penalty for harbouring priests. At Sunderland Father Ducket was joined by another priest, the saintly Jesuit Father, Ralph Corby, who was apprehended a few days later (July 8th), when saying Mass at Hamsterley near Newcastle. The holy man was reading the Epistle when the pursuivants rushed in upon him. The two martyrs were hurried on board a vessel at eleven o'clock at night to be conveyed to London. They first got speech with each other on the deck of this ship. They had laboured side by side in the same portion of the Lord's vineyard, and now in their death they were not to be divided. As an old account says, "After their first meeting on board ship they lived together as twin brothers and kindred souls, were committed to prison together, brought to trial together, and together happily met the same holy death." They had much to suffer on the voyage. "The hard usage of the soldiers and mariners," says another writer, "by the way of their passage I omit. . . . Only I say their conduct was like those leopards which brought St. Ignatius to Rome, who only became worse the better they were treated." They arrived in London, July 22nd (O.S.), and were carried before a committee of the Parliament at Westminster, where their confession that they were priests was produced and acknowledged by them once more. Upon this they were ordered to Newgate, and conducted thither through the streets, lined with the mob, by a whole company of soldiers, with their captain at their head, beating their drums and shooting off their muskets from time to time, as if they had taken in war the generals of their enemies, and like the old Romans were carrying them in triumph.

In Newgate the servants of God remained close prisoners till the next sessions, that is, till the month of September. It was a consolation to them that the day on which they were thus conducted to prison was the feast of St. Peter's

Chains, August 1st (N.S.). They spent the time that intervened before their trial in spiritual exercises, preparing themselves for death with the greatest fervour and joy. They seem indeed to have entered into a sort of holy rivalry as to which should surpass the other in humility, zeal, charity, and other heroic virtues, as day by day they grew into the pattern of Jesus Christ their Captain and their great Exemplar. Many Catholics bribed the gaolers to allow them access to the prison, in order that they might receive the Sacraments from these holy priests. Among them was one named Belwood who had through human frailty yielded so far as to take the oath of allegiance, which had been forbidden by the Pope as containing several things contrary to faith. This the martyrs did not know when they admitted the gentleman to the Sacraments, but on being informed of it they lost no time in setting the matter right, so as to avoid giving any cause for scandal. They agreed that Father Corby should speak to Mr. Belwood, and ask him in all gentleness and charity, not to come again to them, as they felt they could not under the circumstances admit him to Holy Communion. When that gentleman wished to argue the question, the martyr simply replied that the oath was forbidden by the Head of the Church, and that sufficed for him.

Their desire for martyrdom grew daily stronger. Father Corby confessed to an intimate friend that for four years, since the Scottish troops invaded the North of England, he had longed to suffer for Christ, and had prayed constantly for this blessed consummation. Father Ducket fully shared this holy longing. For years he had lived more in heaven than on earth, and now that Paradise seemed almost as it were within his grasp, this longing grew ever more intense. This joyous expectancy could not be concealed, but betrayed itself in the radiant faces of the martyrs. Many of their visitors were so touched by this, that they shed tears of joy and admiration. The holy priests meanwhile watched with

great anxiety lest by any chance the palm should be snatched from their hands, and the crown be lost which was now, as it were, suspended above their heads. A very touching instance of this is given by their biographers. The Imperial Resident[1] (or Ambassador) in London was instructed to offer as an exchange for one of the holy priests, a Scottish colonel who was at that time the Emperor's prisoner. He made the first offer in writing to Father Corby, the elder of the two, but the Jesuit steadily refused it. He thanked his Excellency for his kindness, but he was already old and weak in health, he had exhausted his strength on the mission, and could not hope to be able to labour much longer in Christ's vineyard. He therefore begged that the offer might be transferred to Father Ducket, who was young and vigorous and eminently gifted, and might be of much service in furthering the salvation of souls for a long time to come. But when the Resident sent the offer to Father Ducket, he too refused it as courteously and as steadily. He declared that he was of no use compared with Father Corby, whose age and experience made him of great value to the English Mission, while he was inexperienced and of little account. The Ambassador in amazement then determined to act no more by messengers, but to go to the prison himself and see these men who seemed so eager for death. He therefore went to Newgate, and was present at a notable exhibition of humility and charity, in which each endeavoured to persuade the other to accept this hope of life and liberty now offered to him, so that all who were present were filled with silent admiration, marvelling at the novelty of this contention. The humility and fervour of the early martyrs of the Church seemed brought before their eyes. The event was to show that God was pleased that each victim should be brought to the altar, and that neither should lose the sacrifice, but for the moment Father Corby gained the victory. He had been

[1] Le Sieur de Lisola [De Marsys].

born in Ireland, whither his parents had fled to escape the persecution, and it was thought that the act of Elizabeth which condemned priests to death only referred to natives of England. He might therefore escape in any case, whereas there was no other hope of life for Father Ducket. He therefore gained his point, much to the sorrow of our martyr, who exclaimed that though he felt he must accept the offer, which Father Corby did not need, lest he should seem to throw his life away, yet he would none the less take care to do what he lawfully might to obtain the longed-for crown. On September 4th the two priests were brought up for trial. Glyn, the Recorder, asked Father Ducket if he were a priest. He replied: "Yes, I am." Upon this the Recorder said to the jury, "You know what follows, he confesseth himself a traitor." "No," said the holy man, "I do not confess myself a traitor, though I confess myself a priest."

But this was all that was required; the jury immediately brought in a verdict of "guilty," and the servant of God was condemned to die the barbarous and terrible death allotted to the crime of high treason. The sentence ran as follows: "You shall return to prison, and be taken from prison, placed on a wicker hurdle, and dragged to Tyburn, where you shall be half hanged with a rope, and when you are half dead, your bowels and heart shall be taken out, and your bodies divided into four parts, which parts shall be taken to Newgate and exposed in some place appointed by His Majesty."

This was strictly legal, of course, for the iniquitous laws of Queen Elizabeth had made it high treason for an Englishman who had been ordained priest abroad to come back to England. It was sought to conceal the cruelty of religious persecution under the cloak of providing for the safety of the State. But as our Blessed Lord Himself was condemned as a traitor to Cæsar, so His servants knew that the joining of this ignominy to their other sufferings only

increased their likeness to Him and added a new lustre to their heavenly crown.

Father Ducket, on being condemned, told the judge that he rejoiced more to hear the sentence pronounced against him, than he (the judge) did to pronounce it. It was remarked with awe that his face, which up till then had been naturally pale, was now wonderfully transfigured. "His countenance became in a manner angelical, and his cheeks beautifully red, and so continued till his death. This was so remarkable that some of his friends, who commissioned an artist to take his portrait in prison, were quite astonished when they received it, and declared that it was not at all like the martyr. But all those who had seen him during the last three days of his life declared that it exactly represented his appearance at that time. In truth, the blessed man might well rejoice, for, as he wrote to a friend, *ever since he was a priest he did much fear to live, but nothing fear to die.* He knew how much death for such a cause would profit him, like St. Ignatius the martyr who cast himself on the lion's jaws, saying to his weeping disciples, 'I know what is profitable to me, pardon me, my children.'"

In the meantime Father Corby had also been condemned, and the martyrs were taken back to Newgate. Father Corby remarked that in Catholic countries it was the feast of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross (September 14th), though in England where the Old Style was still clung to it was the 4th. The martyrs now looked forward with joy, as Father Corby wrote to "that blessed and happy Saturday which is the vigil of her glorious nativity by whose holy intercession I hope to be born again to a new and everlasting life."

Saturday, September 7th, was the day then fixed upon for the execution of the sentence.

To be half strangled, to be disembowelled, and hacked to pieces while life still lingered in the quivering form—such was the frightful death the very thought of which made the martyrs' faces radiant with supernatural joy; such the fate to

which John Ducket had knowingly and gladly exposed himself with such heroic courage and charity; such the death for which they had but one more day and night wherein to prepare themselves.

As they left the Old Bailey, one John Wingfield, a turnkey of the prison, called "the horse-leech of Newgate" on account of the extortions which he practised on the hapless prisoners, roughly demanded his fees. None were of course due to him, nevertheless the priests gently answered that he should be satisfied as soon as possible, but that they had not then upon them the amount which he claimed. Whereupon "this griping bloodsucker" threw them into the common prison, amongst rogues, thieves, and murderers—*et cum sceleratis reputati sunt.*[1] Irons were brought to be put on their legs. Father Ducket, being the younger and more healthy man, offered his legs first, and the bolts were fastened on them. Wolleston, the chief gaoler, however, interfered, and had them removed from this dreadful place, though not till their friends had given him money. It was not that the martyrs shrank from additional sufferings; but in the common prison they would have had no privacy, and could not have fortified themselves for the last great conflict with the Bread of the Strong. This they had been able to do in their former prison in the Justice Hall, to which they were now again conducted.

The short time that remained to them was given wholly to prayer, fasting, and watching. Not once did they close their eyes in sleep, for the time that was not given to prayer was wholly devoted to works of charity. They were indeed besieged by Catholics who came to offer them their reverent sympathy, to beg their counsel and their prayers, or to receive the Sacraments from their hands. Among these visitors were several foreign Ambassadors, who treated the martyrs with extraordinary marks of respect. All were full of veneration for these blessed warriors of Christ, whom

[1] "They were numbered with the transgressors."

they already looked upon as men certain to be soon inhabitants of heaven. The martyrs, on their part, were ready to do all in their power to gratify their pious visitors. Father Corby, mindful of the benefits of his education, promised to pray specially for the King of Spain and the Elector of Bavaria[1] as well as for the peoples committed to their charge. The French Ambassador, M. de Sabran, made his confession to the holy Jesuit, and received from him a rosary and a blessed medal for the Queen-mother, and a written promise to pray for the good estate of his Sovereigns and for the French nation.

A still more illustrious visitor determined to spend the whole of the night in the company of the martyrs. This was the Duchess of Guise, who had been paying a visit to London at the time. She had already begun her homeward journey and had reached Dover, when she heard of the condemnation of these holy priests. She seems to have known Father Ducket in Paris, and she was anxious to make her confession to him and receive Holy Communion from his hands. So she came back to London in all haste, and arrived with the Marquis de Brossay and the rest of the suite at an advanced hour of the evening. She and her companions, desiring to show as emphatically as possible their reverence for these holy victims and in their persons for the Catholic cause itself, spent the whole night in watching and prayer, as in a sacred vigil, and assisted most religiously while the martyrs offered the Unbloody Sacrifice of the Altar. Father Ducket, however, out of humility, refused to hear the princess's confession. He pleaded that his knowledge of French was but slight, and though it was certain that he could have understood her had he wished, he succeeded in inducing her to have recourse to Father Corby. A number of other Catholics were present at the last Masses of the martyrs, and received from their hands the Bread of Angels, and the Duchess of Guise purchased the

[1] Protectors of the Colleges of Valladolid and Liége.

chalice which had been used for the sacred rite. This she ever afterwards preserved as a most sacred relic. The French Ambassador was also eager for relics, and he bade his servants cut off a portion of the martyrs' cassocks. But a devout person represented to them that it would be unbecoming for the priests to appear in mangled habits, and so the project was deferred until they came to Tyburn.

Father Corby experienced during his Mass a brief but sharp agony of sadness and fear; but this shadow of Gethsemane soon passed away, and he was left serene and calm. Father Ducket, on the other hand, seems to have been overflowing all the time with spiritual joy and exaltation.

He had occupied part of those precious hours in converting to God a criminal who was condemned to die with them next day. This poor man had been baptized a Catholic, but had strayed away from the fold. Father Ducket's charitable labours were completely successful, and his convert, publicly, and with tears, expressed, at the very foot of the gibbet, his deep contrition for his offence and his determination to die in the bosom of the one true Church.

No wonder, then, that it was with a countenance transfigured with holy joy that the glorious martyr received the summons to come forth to death. It was, as we have said, the morning of Saturday, September 7, 1644. "It was noted by all sorts of spectators that he had a continual smile in his looks all the way he went to execution, which smile, it seemed, was from the heart. For, when the blessed man came to the hurdle, he was not content to be helped up, but of himself leaped into the straw, and composed himself upon it, as if he had been riding in triumph. Before he went out of the prison to the hurdle, he smilingly said to many weeping about him, 'Why weep ye for me, who am glad at heart of this happy day?' and added, '*Hæc dies quam fecit Dominus exultemus et lætemur in ea.*' ['This is the day which the Lord hath made, let us rejoice and be glad in it.'] Some of the gaolers, observing his smiling farewell from the

prison, said, 'Assuredly this man dies for a good cause, since he and all of his profession go cheerfully to the gallows, whereas those of our religion go thither weeping and wringing their hands.'

"He gave his benediction to all that asked it on the way, with his head raised from the hurdle and a smiling look. This was testified unto me by many, but especially by Don Antonio de Sousa, Resident for the King of Portugal, who attended the martyrs unto the place of execution, and twice upon the way spoke to them and asked their benedictions, and affirms with what alacrity Father Ducket gave it him. At the gallows [1] he said little, only told the minister that went about to corrupt him, 'Sir, I came not hither to be taught my faith, but to die for the profession of it.' It seems there was a fear lest Father Ducket should have spoken much out of the abundant joy that appeared in him, so to prevent that he was in a manner throttled alive, by an ill-favoured hampering of the rope about his neck, which the hangman used to none but him, and he was observed to stand a long time in prayer upon the cart, before it was drawn away, half hanged indeed. When the hangman came to cast the rope about his neck, Father Ducket took it into his own hands, and, smiling, kissed it for joy that he *was so near the end of his time and the beginning of eternity*, for he did many times express the sense he had of eternity, and

[1] Tyburn, the place of execution, was close to where the Marble Arch now stands, at the corner of Hyde Park. It was a great, triangular gallows, affording room for many persons to be hanged together. During those cruel days it was a tree seldom devoid of fruit. Catholics greatly venerated it as the Calvary where so many of their holiest priests and laymen had offered up their lives to God. The two priests were drawn thither on a hurdle, to which they were bound in a recumbent position, and arrived there half stunned with jolting over the stony, ill-kept road, and covered with mud and filth. Tyburn was, of course, at that time, outside the walls of London, and the route thither lay through the modern crowded thoroughfares of Holborn and Oxford Street. Those who were to suffer were made to stand in a cart under the gallows, the ropes were then adjusted about their necks, the horses whipped up, the carts drawn away, and they left hanging.

his longing for it, which made him glad of the shortness of his time upon so happy an occasion."

"Men looked on his face," says another eye-witness of the scene, "as it were that of an angel, so transported was he with joy at the thought of heaven which he would so soon enjoy. This silent eloquence had great influence in moving the hearts of the spectators. While Father Corby spoke to the people, he occupied himself with his convert, whose name was Heward. This poor man had been condemned for coining bad money, but he declared to his last breath that he was innocent. At the same time, he professed his faith so boldly, and with such deep penitence for his apostasy, that the Protestants present were greatly enraged, especially the minister who accompanied the condemned. But the more the parson upbraided him, the more full and fervent were his expressions of the holy Catholic faith, to the edification of all the Catholics present, and to the great confusion of the heretics.

"Meanwhile some priests who were present in disguise gave absolution, at a sign previously agreed upon, to these brave warriors of Christ, and having received this, and affectionately embraced each other, the cart was quickly drawn from under them, and they were left hanging for some time, till their happy souls had left their bodies. The Sheriff had remitted this part of the severity of the law, so that they were not cut down and quartered half alive, as was the custom. Moreover, with great humanity, he ordered an artery to be opened, that it might be evident that they were quite dead. But this lenity he immediately stained by his harshness; for he at once ordered whatever was found tinged with their blood to be burnt, and even the aprons worn by the executioners and the sleeves drawn on over their arms to be washed, that, forsooth, "the Popish dogs" might have nothing to venerate and kiss, or keep by way of relic. Some, however, obtained fragments torn from the cassock of Mr. Ducket, and one of his hands which had been cut off, and some

other things, either by craft or for money, or with pious daring; and also the whole cassock of Father Corby which they brought to the Fathers of our Society[1] in London as a most acceptable token of remembrance."

Another writer adds: "One thing was singular in these blessed martyrs, more than in all that went before them in England of latter days, that they both appeared in their own weeds in this last scene of their lives, going with their hair cut, shaven crowns, and in their cassocks, from the prison to the place of execution, which, if they had asked leave to do, perhaps had been denied them, as it was to some who had asked leave before and were denied. Oh, may their going out of this world in these reverend habits, and in their shaven crowns, be an introduction of the free use of these habits and crowns in England."

We may well end this brief history of our glorious martyr with some last words spoken by Father Corby, in the name of both. "*If our desiring the salvation of our neighbours, if our receiving for this purpose the holy order of priesthood, instituted by Christ, if our bringing back to Christ's fold the sheep that were gone astray, be against the laws of the kingdom and punishable by death, I would have the whole world understand that in such a cause we are not afraid of death, but earnestly desire it, and embrace it with open arms. Yes, Mr. Sheriff, we most willingly render this day to our Saviour, who most willingly died for us all, this life of ours, due a thousand times over, to His merits and death; and we shall joyfully die for the love of Him, and for the cause of our religion.*"

We have only to add that when the tidings of the martyr's death reached his old College at Douay, a solemn Mass of thanksgiving was duly sung on October 20, according to the privilege granted by Pope Paul V. in 1616. The Pope granted a plenary indulgence to all the English who should assist at this Mass, which was to be sung in honour of the Blessed Trinity in thanksgiving whenever the news of the

[1] The writer of this account was a Jesuit.

martyrdom of a priest in England should reach the college. Thus Holy Church celebrated the victory of her son, thus the faithful remnant of the old Catholic England rejoiced in their brother's triumph. May the day be not far distant when to us it may be permitted to pay him and his companions in that white-robed host honours yet more public and more sacred; when throughout the north country the image of our martyr may be seen above many an altar, and his feast be celebrated by the faithful people with the devotion, the love, and the gratitude which they most surely owe him.

APPENDIX A.

The following letter was written by John Ducket to Richard Smith, Bishop of Chalcedon and Vicar Apostolic of England, then resident in Paris. It is transcribed from the original, preserved in the Archives of the Diocese of Westminster, Vol. xxx., No. 60, p. 189:—

Most reverend father in God, I desire you to give me leave to bidd you farewell, being it is the last opportunitie I shall have in this life of presenting my humble dutie to your Lordshipp. My time is spent and eternitie approtsheth, not of miserie, but of ioy. I fear not death nor I contemne not life; if life were my lott, I should endure it patientlie but if death, I shall receive it ioyfullie, for that Christ is my life, and death is my gaine. Never since my receiving of holie orders did I soe much feare death as I did life, and now when it approtsheth can I faint? O no, for the nearer it is at hand the more my soul reioyceth, and will ever till my life be ended in this hapie cause; and then

most of all, as I well hoape in the mercy of Christ Jesus; for whose sake I suffer. Therefore, I begg of your Lordshipp, and also of those two worthie houses of which I am a most unworthie member, to give God thanks for this great benefit which He mercifullie bestowes on me a miserable sinner; let us all, I beseech you, reioyce and exult in this daie which our Lord hath maide, who be for ever praised of all, for time and eternitie.

Your Lordshipp's humble and undeserving servant,

JOHN DUCKETT.

Endorsed :—

For my Lord. [In the martyr's handwriting.]
The original letter of Bd. Mr. John Ducket which he writt to my Lord Richard, Bishop of Chalcedon, with his owne hand the night before his blessed martyrdome. [Added in another handwriting.]

APPENDIX B.

THE MARTYR'S PORTRAIT (*see title page*).

This portrait is one of the famous Lanherne pictures. There are nine portraits of English martyrs brought to the Carmelite nuns of Antwerp (now at Lanherne) by a novice, Miss Mary Gifford, of the well-known Staffordshire family. The tradition about them is that they were painted by her father, who had been a fellow-prisoner of the martyrs, and who, being anxious to have their portraits, painted them himself, "and although entirely unacquainted with the art of painting, succeeded almost in a miraculous manner."

Miss Gifford made profession at Antwerp, April 8th, 1681, under the religious name of Sister Mary of the Martyrs. The other eight portraits represent the Venerable Martyrs Ralph Corbie, S.J.; Francis Bell, O.S.F.; Henry Heath, O.S.F.; Henry Morse, S.J.; Thomas Holland, S.J.: Peter Wright, S.J.; Hugh Green and William Ward, priests.

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For Christ's Sake!

A CATHOLIC SOCIAL CRUSADE

BY

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NOTE.

When my booklet "St. Francis and You" appeared, I was asked by several friends among the clergy and laity to issue a smaller pamphlet on the same lines, but addressed to Catholics in general. The present pamphlet is issued in response to this request. It is substantially, with the exception of the first few pages, a reprint of Part II. of "St. Francis and You," with a few verbal alterations made necessary by the fact of being addressed, not to Franciscan Tertiaries only, but to Catholics at large.

F. C.

FOR CHRIST'S SAKE!

A CATHOLIC SOCIAL CRUSADE.

THE close of the nineteenth century finds the Catholic world protesting its homage and devotion to the Divine Redeemer. It is a fitting act of worship, coming at the end of a century marked at once by a great denial of faith in our Lord's divinity and by a widespread indifference to practical religion. But this denial of Jesus Christ in word and deed has of late years been followed by a keen revival of faith in Him and of interest in His Church. The present is a time of promise. Already we see signs of a great re-awakening of the Christian world to the reality and responsibility of Christian life—an awakening based on personal devotion to our Divine Lord. In this fact specially lies the hope of the near future. Personal devotion to Jesus Christ is the key-note of true religious life as we find in the history of the Apostles and first disciples. They left all things *to follow Christ*, and, like St. Paul, they so identified themselves with Him and His cause, that they seemed no longer to live except in Christ and for Him. "I live, and yet not I, but Christ liveth in me." But what was it that made them so entirely surrender themselves to Jesus Christ? This and this only—that He gave to them a new life worth living; He showed them the true value of life, and convinced them of eternal life. He implanted in their hearts a firm belief in the life to come, and taught them that this life on earth is but the shadow and beginning of eternity. More than this, Jesus Christ gave them the hope of attaining themselves eternal life, by attaching themselves to Him, becoming His disciples, and putting on His own divine spirit. To those who did this He promised forgiveness of sin and life eternal. He was the Redeemer of all who, believing in Him, gave themselves to Him and became His.

Such was the faith which transformed the lives of those Galilean fisherman who became Christ's first Apostles; which replaced the pagan philosophies that had promised the soul happiness but left it dry and in discontent; which replaced the despair of a decaying empire with the hope and joy of a new life.

The same faith, realised with the directness and simplicity of the primitive Christians, made St. Francis of Assisi what he was. He loved Christ. His joy was to follow in Christ's footsteps and, as far as he could, to carry out Christ's precepts. In the following of Christ he experienced in truth the joy of life; for Christ's sake even hardships and persecution became sweet: just as most men with any manliness in them joyfully accept trouble and pain in the interest of those they love. As it was with St. Francis, so it was with all the saints.

But Jesus Christ Himself has warned those who come to Him that "the road is narrow," and that to follow Him is to "take up the cross daily." We cannot walk with Him unless, like the Cyrenean, we help to carry the cross on which our own sin and that of the world at large is redeemed: except, indeed, we are of those who follow Him in order to mock and jeer—if not in words, at least by the infidelity of their lives. The true Christian is he who suffers with Christ for the redemption of the world. And the world is redeemed from its sin only by much suffering. There is the suffering one cannot escape—poverty, sickness, persecution, temptation: all the results of the world's sin, and consequently to be borne with patience and accepted "for the remission of sin." Then there is the suffering which comes to us directly by our own will—the self-denial which we deem necessary for the overcoming of our own evil inclinations or for the avoidance of temptation; and still further, the self-denial we impose upon ourselves for the sake of others, to assist them by example in their struggle with the evil that is in them. "Bear ye one another's burdens," is the Apostolic commandment. We must think not of ourselves alone but of those around us. Our service of Christ implies service of our fellow-men. "As you do unto these my least brethren, you do unto me." We all of us must bear the burden of the world's sin as Christ bore it, if we would be faithful disciples of Christ.

We must preach by example the Christian doctrine of the

Cross, of that self-denial whereby alone the world is saved. To-day it is as true as ever it was before that only by the Cross can the world be redeemed. But to those who for Christ's sake take up the cross of self-denial will be given that crown and joy which is the portion of those who may follow Christ —the crown and joy of life eternal.

Our Social Crusade.

Now there are three chief evils in the world to-day which sap the foundation of its moral and religious life and effectually put it at variance with the teaching of the Gospel. These evils are: selfishness in the commercial dealings of man with man, intemperance in drink, and the growing disregard of the marriage vow. These are the foes against which the Church has in a particular manner to do battle at this time.

The First Evil of the Day—Commercial Selfishness.

In the first place there is the intense selfishness of our commercial system. Based essentially upon free and open competition, it has tended to develop that spirit of self-reliance and personal initiative of which we may well be proud; but it has also degenerated too frequently into a means of oppressing the weak and ignorant. By it the nation has become rich and powerful; it has created fabulous wealth, and for great numbers of the people has raised the standard of comfort higher than ever before in the nation's history. At the same time, it has created wealth and comfort at a bitter cost; the cost of comfortless lives, incessant labour, and the estrangement of class from class. It has developed the sweating system, bloated monopolies and trusts, whereby the lives of the poor are made a constant misery and anxiety, through uncertain labour and starvation wages. The tradesman of small capital is at the mercy of the large capitalist, and little mercy he experiences at times. When the market is overstocked with workers the opportunity is taken to lessen a wage oftentimes already hardly just. In the competition between rival companies the worker is made to suffer in order that the employer may compete successfully, and yet not lose his own profits. The

owner of house property in a crowded city seizes his chance of exacting higher rent as the city becomes more crowded. Men must have some sort of shelter; their need becomes the selfish owner's cruellest ally in exacting a rent out of all proportion to the wretched tenement rented. Gambling and speculation, in one form or another, has become an ordinary source of income, against which men's consciences have ceased to protest. To be able to outwit one's neighbour is considered almost a virtue.

In such a condition of society the weak, the ignorant, the unintelligent, and the poor have no chance of escaping social degradation and constant suffering. True, the balance is slightly righted by the doles of charity now and again thrown out by some successful speculator; but such doles can never repay the poor for the injustice and misery inflicted by the grasping competitor or clever gambler.

Yet it is not fair to blame those only who succeed and rise upon the wave of commercial prosperity. If men and women are sweated to death for a miserable pittance, who are to blame? Not the employers only, though their sin is great; but all who patronise such labour contribute to the sin. The insatiable yearning to buy cheaply, without any thought as to whether cheapness is consistent with fair wages, this is the incentive which tempts men to buy cheap labour and underpay the workman. Were people in general not willing accomplices, there would be no sweating system, no unfair competition. The sin falls not on the few, but on the many, who too readily condone the sin of the few for the sake of the resultant advantage to themselves. They pay a halfpenny less for a pound of sugar, or a shilling or two less on a ton of coal: what does the public care that the shop assistant or the miner is unable to get a human wage? And wherefore this craze for cheapness, but that most often people may have more money to spend in unnecessary luxuries, in fine ribbons or a better brand of tobacco and such like. It is the increasing luxury of the period which gives the public its thirst for cheapness and condones the injustice of the sweater and smiles on the successful gambler.

The Demoralization of Labour.

Nor must we forget how in the race for money labour itself has become degraded. There was a time when men

delighted in the work of their hands for its own sake. Nowadays the workman has come to regard his labour from the mere financial point of view—he values it by its weight in silver or gold; and as the employer has sweated him for an inhuman wage, so oftentimes he will scamp his work when he gets the chance, and prides himself upon being thus equal with the employer. Frequently, however, it is the just employer who suffers most from the dishonest workingman. Yet in the commercial scramble who cares? The appalling fact is that the majority of people are blind to the injustice of it all.

Commercial speculation and intercourse are, in fact, placed outside the ordinary Christian law. When it comes to buying and selling, hiring and being hired, all idea of inherent justice and Christian charity is put aside. "We cannot conduct business on the principles of the eight beatitudes," is their variation of the famous dictum of the Anglican bishop.

Now, this is just one of the points where society to-day needs Christianity most urgently. Christian principles must enter into business transactions equally as into any other act of life. A healthy rivalry in trade, based upon ability and energy, is quite consistent with justice and charity, and with that regard one for another which the Gospel commands. It is the grasping, selfish abuse of ability and strength which is incompatible with the Gospel.

The Gospel and Trade.

Under an evangelic condition of commercial dealings, there would doubtless be less mighty fortunes; but there would probably be more general comfort, and a greater proportion between the conditions of rich and poor; there would be less luxury, but also less misery. The idler would be banned from society; but the helpless and the luckless would not be left to starve in a garret.

Is it impossible, we ask, to get men in these days to base their commercial transactions—their buying and selling—upon that justice and charity which is the groundwork of truly Christian society? St. Francis of Assisi in his day did not find it impossible to supplant the civic feud by Christian fellowship: why should it be impossible in these days to supplant commercial selfishness by the self-same spirit of Christian fellowship? Is it too much to expect of Catholics

in these days that they should pledge themselves to strive after justice in dealing with their neighbours; not to take an unfair advantage of their neighbour's weakness or necessity; to consider, before they demand cheap goods, whether such goods can be sold cheaply without decreasing the fair wage of the labourer; to pay a "human wage" when they hire labour;[1] and to give a just return in labour for wages received? Such a pledge to-day would correspond with the civic pledge demanded by St. Francis of the world of his day. Then it was the free use of arms which caused the misery; now it is the selfish use of open competition.

If Catholics would set themselves to oppose by their example the commercial sin of this age, truly they would show themselves the standard-bearers of that Christian Brotherhood of which the earliest Christians have left us an example in the Acts of the Apostles, and for which Christ prayed with earnest prayer the night before His passion.

But it may be objected that whoever would set himself to act in his commercial dealings differently from the community at large will suffer much loss and hardly succeed in whatever business he may undertake; that nothing can be done until all men agree to be Christians in business. The answer to such objection is given by the early disciples of our Lord. Had they waited for the whole world to become Christian before themselves professing their faith, there would have been no Christian Church. Had the first Christians held back until the whole of pagan society responded to our Lord's teaching, the Church would never have existed. Some personal loss or suffering accompanies every good work: the world is ever redeemed on Calvary. Is not our symbol the Cross, and our watchword "to follow Christ and Him crucified?" Whoever is unwilling to suffer some loss or some pain in the cause of the Gospel has assuredly no right to the Christian name.

Intemperance—The Second Great Evil.

Commercial selfishness, however, is but the primary sin of the age. In its wake have followed two other urgent evils, against which it becomes the duty of Catholics to

[1] Pope Leo XIII. describes a "human wage" as that which enables a man to live by his labour in reasonable comfort.

bear witness. One of these evils is intemperance in drink; the other, the growing disregard for the sanctity of domestic life.

Intemperance in drink is, unhappily, a growing evil. It has rightly been called the most glaring evil of the day. The demoralisation of so large a part of the country, begun by greed of money, bids fair to be completed by intemperance. Men's lives are constantly wrecked; homes are broken up; and, worst of all, the craving for drink is transmitted from parent to child, making the child's life a perpetual misery from the almost irresistible temptation to which the child is exposed. Can we understand if so many men in early youth give up the struggle and succumb to their parents' sin? Amongst the poor intemperance shows its worst effects. Badly fed, they more easily collapse before the temptation; and wherever they go they are beckoned onward and allured to their fate by the numberless public-houses that infest our cities and towns and villages. Cardinal Vaughan, in a paper he read at the Catholic Truth Society Conference [1] at Stockport in 1899, has well described the temptation to which the poor are exposed: "The houses of the trade are studded over the most squalid and poorest districts, and as so many vampires suck the life-blood out of the bodies of the poor. . . . They are traps baited to catch the poor man. They care not who comes in—a labourer with his wages, a wife or mother in anguish and distress, a bright boy, a sickly girl, a little child—all are welcome, have they only a copper. The coppers roll up into silver, the silver into gold, and gigantic fortunes are rapidly made. The rich become richer and richer as they eat the flesh of the poor man and drink his blood, without even a thought to the ruin of his soul. Disease, crime, pauperism are perpetuated; sixty thousand persons a year perish through drink." And the Rev. Dr. Barry at the same Conference [2] said: "In our modern English world the practical Christianity of our people depends on this, whether they let themselves down to be serfs and slaves of the public-house, or whether they keep away from it."

Now, the evil of intemperance—so deeply ingrained in the national life—can only be dealt with by a general

[1] See *The Work of the Catholic Laity in England.* C. T. S., 1d.
[2] See *The Layman in the Church.* C. T. S., 1d.

crusade. The Total Abstinence movement propagated by the Capuchin, Father Mathew, has already done much to stem the tide of the evil; and too much praise cannot be given to those who heroically placed themselves under his banner. All, however, are not able to keep to total abstinence; but these can at least avoid taking alcoholic drink for the mere pleasure of taking it. The same rule should be applied to drink as is applied by all self-respecting men to food generally: not to eat outside of one's meals except in case of necessity; and even at one's meals to eat in moderation. A similar law should be imposed upon oneself in regard to alcoholic drink. The fatal habit of intemperance is more often than not acquired through the habit of drinking for pleasure when one meets an acquaintance or joins a party. If the nation could be induced to give up this custom, a long stride would have been taken towards making England sober.

The English bishops some years ago endeavoured to institute the Temperance movement upon this wider basis. They asked those who could, to pledge themselves to abstain from alcholic drink altogether; those who did not feel themselves able to do this, they asked to abstain in certain circumstances: as, for example, to avoid taking drink outside meals or in public-houses.

To Catholics the Temperance question is indeed one of deep concern since so many of our people belong to the class which is most exposed to temptation. Is it asking too much if we appeal to our poorer Catholics in particular to set their neighbours good example by avoiding the public-house as the working-man's direst enemy? If they need their glass of beer, let them take it in their own homes, in strict moderation; but let them, even at the cost of some personal inconvenience, avoid drinking in the public-house: and let them induce others to avoid the public-house likewise. In the avoidance of the drinking bar lies the salvation of the majority of the working-class. It is difficult for many to refuse the friendly invitation to enter the public-house and have a glass of beer; and to many the difficulty arises from the seeming churlishness or want of geniality of the refusal. But, as has been said before, all good works present some difficulty: in this case, however, the chief difficulty will vanish when men recognise that the refusal

comes from honest conviction and is accompanied by no boastful self-conceit.

The Third Evil—The Dishonouring of Marriage.

We come now to that other great danger which threatens English society—the dishonouring of domestic life. The domestic circle is the cradle of the nation; if that be degenerate, this must shortly totter to its ruin. Around the hearth the child's life is formed; there, too, the most intimate and sacred qualities of a man's character are developed. Destroy the home, and you take away from the ordinary man the strongest inducement to self-sacrifice and to persistent energy: for in the home a man learns to forget himself in those he loves; in their presence he unfolds his simpler and nobler self. To most men a pure and happy home is the very gate of heaven, saving them from the baser part of themselves; but it must be a pure and happy home, otherwise it becomes a veritable hell upon earth. "*Corruptio optimi pessima est.*"

Now the secret of home life depends, in the first place, on conjugal fidelity, and secondly, on filial devotion. In both these respects we cannot contemplate our present world without grave misgiving. The marriage bond is becoming looser; the moral tie between children and parents is getting thin. Filial reverence is no longer the power it was, but then neither is the marriage bond. With the desecration of marriage, home life is impossible. Every year, unfortunately, divorces and judicial separations increase, and separations of husband and wife by mutual consent are perhaps even more frequent. Marriage is becoming among many a mere by-word, and thus the very foundation of Christian society is threatened.

The causes of this state of things are not far to seek. There is the self-indulgence and impatience of restraint coincident with an age of luxury, both material and intellectual. Individualism unchecked by the Gospel will naturally throw off all bonds, and liberty degenerates into licentiousness. Marriage, according to the Gospel, is not an indulgence, but a responsibility. It imposes a restraint; it signifies a duty. It neither legalises vice nor puts aside the virtue of chastity. It is a sacrament, symbolical of the

union of God and the soul, of Christ and the world; a religious bond, therefore, demanding the utmost reverence and a stern purity. But this is not how marriage is regarded by many in English society to-day. People rush into marriage heedless of its sanctity and responsibility; they are constrained by the impulse of the moment, or they buy and are bought, or they thirst for the excitement of a new venture, or they are impatient "to be settled in life"; without serious thought as to whether they can together fulfil the life-long responsibility of the marriage state. When will people learn to prepare for marriage as for a great religious act? An act which for its highest fulfilment requires a clean life in the past as well as an honest purpose for the future. When will they learn that in getting married they take upon themselves one of the most solemn duties possible to man? Whilst men and women enter recklessly into the marriage state, there will always be homes that are dens of misery and vice.

Even when marriage is entered into, as it should be, with a sense of its sanctity and responsibility, there will always be required that unceasing moral vigilance and self-restraint, and that single-eyed adherence to duty, which alone guarantees the faithful discharge of a difficult vocation. Self-denial is of the very essence of conjugal devotion. Husband and wife from the moment that they pronounce their vows, owe to each other a supreme devotion and affection, such as they can give to no other creature. To deprive each other in any way of that supreme devotion is to derogate from their vow. They may have friendships and gather each around them a circle of acquaintances; but such friendships have not the sacramental character of the supreme devotion they owe each other, and, if need be, must be sacrificed to that supreme devotion.

Moreover, they owe to each other a high reverence as partners in a great religious act and duty. This reverence implies a constant respect for the individual character of each other. As the Sarum Missal has it, husband and wife are "two souls in one body." Each must respect in the other their spiritual individuality, which can be subject to God alone. The wife's conscience is not under the control of the husband, nor the husband's under the control of the wife; neither is it to be supposed that the ideal husband and

wife will have just the same intellectual tastes or qualities of character. Indeed, the true beauty of married life is in the harmony of two different characters conjoined in seeking one and the same high purpose in life. But such a harmony can exist only where there is unselfishness and self-denial. Marriage, like every other state in life, is glorified only by the Cross.

To convince the modern world of the sanctity of marriage is in truth one of the most urgent tasks before the Church in this country. Young men and young women must be taught that marriage is a solemn duty and a religious act. They must be told that to prepare themselves to enter into this sacramental state they must endeavour to keep themselves pure from their youth; nor rush recklessly into marriage before they are satisfied that they are fitted for its responsibilities. And parents, too, must be brought to think well of the responsibility they incur when endeavouring to arrange marriages for their children. How many a mother has sold her daughter into perpetual misery for the sake of social influence! And are we to wonder if the daughter after a while finds the bond unbearable and severs it? In such a case the mother has sinned rather than the daughter; and she has sinned doubly, against the desecrated sacrament, and against the daughter whom she condemned to misery.

Amongst the poor such cases as these are but seldom found. The poor are not sold for social influence; but they sometimes do bargain themselves away for food and shelter: a more excusable fault, but one to be deplored. In other ways, however, the poor learn but too easily from the laxity of the rich and educated: as someone has remarked, the vices of the rich filter through to the poor. To save both rich and poor, then, the Church has in these days need to assert vehemently the sacramental character of marriage, as she has ever done. This, indeed, has ever been one of her brightest glories, that she has unceasingly upheld the sanctity of marriage. But do Catholics themselves always enter into the married state with that sense of responsibility which should be expected from them? Are our Catholic young men and maidens taught to regard marriage as the fitting crown of a pure life? This is the only way to safeguard the sacrament against desecration, and

to invest it with the proper dignity of a sacramental state. Are our Catholic youths, again, made to realise that the duties of husband and wife go beyond the avoidance of legal infidelity, and imply a constant devotion and reverence towards each other higher than they may show towards any other man or woman? It is for Catholics to set the example: and an example so manifest and far beyond reproach that none may cavil at them. Then, and then only, will they be able to induce their non-Catholic fellow-citizens to recognise the sanctity of the marriage vow, and the indissolubility of the marriage tie. Marriage is indissoluble because it is a sacrament: and a sacrament is a holy thing, to be approached with holy thoughts and reverenced with holy deeds.

The greater Liberty of Woman demands more careful Preparation for Marriage.

One fact there is in the present social system which renders it still more imperative that both our young men and young women be convinced of the high responsibilities of marriage; that fact is the increasing social independence of women. The woman who has some definite occupation in life, and who is able to earn her own livelihood, will less readily accept the man who seeks her hand unless he be worthy of her, and shows her that respect and reverence which Christian man should give to Christian woman. True, this very independence, unless met on the part of men with a virtue that commands respect, is not without its dangers. But her new-born independence makes woman in greater measure the arbiter of her own destiny, and that in the long run must conduce to a higher ideal of marriage. The fact of this independence, however, imposes upon parents a still more onerous duty of educating their children to take none but the noblest view of that state to which the vast majority of them are called. From their childhood they need, now more than ever heretofore, to be taught to restrain their natural selfishness, to act with forethought, to assume responsibility when they claim a right or privilege. They must be trained to use their independence with discretion and honesty. They must be deeply convinced that there is a God to Whom they owe allegiance in every step

they take along the path of life. Thus educated, our young women will make the better wives, because they are able to accept more freely their husbands; and our young men will be better husbands in the presence of a free and noble womanhood.

The future lies with the children of to-day; but the children's fate is in great measure in the hands of the parents. If the marriage of the future is to be of a Christian and sacramental character, the parents of to-day, by word and example, must help their children to realise fully what Christian and sacramental marriage is.

Our Standard—"Brotherhood, Temperance, and Purity!"

Here, then, we have the three evils which to-day shake the foundation of society—commercial selfishness, intemperance in drink, and the desecration of the marriage vow. Against these evils we Catholics should band ourselves together, and raise the Christian standard of "*Brotherhood, Temperance, and Purity!*"—to oppose to the vices of the world the principles of the Gospel as they are especially needed at this time.

In particular we appeal to those who call themselves by the name of the seraphic Saint—Franciscans. These have the most urgent duty to set before their fellow-men examples of high Christian virtue. St. Francis ever identified the glory of Jesus Christ with the moral welfare of the human race. He who had Christ in his heart, as he bore Christ's stigmata in his body, bore also in his mind and heart the great human world, with its joys and sorrows, its sunshine and storms. He loved the world as Christ loved the world. To St. Francis the Incarnation was the central fact of human history; and the soft light of the Incarnation lay over all the earth. Only when the world's life was perfected would Christ's glory be complete; only when He had gained His kingdom would the joy of Christ be fulfilled. To the sweet Saint of Assisi the cause of humanity was the cause of Christ, as the cause of Christ was the cause of humanity. To complete the work of the Incarnation, by bringing the world's life into harmony with the teaching of the Gospel, was the Saint's most fervent wish. Hence he would spend

days and nights in tearful prayer, begging for mercy on a sinful world. And when his prayer was said, he would arise and go forth to preach from town to town the doctrine of the love of Christ and the Christian brotherhood, hoping to draw men away from their selfishness and greed and utter worldliness. And the result of his preaching was that thousands were drawn to the love of Christ and the love of their fellow-men, and that wonderful reformation was worked in mediæval society which brought back to men's minds the Scriptural record of the primitive Church. Thus he left an example; and all who would be reckoned his true disciples must do as he did, as far as their weaker power will permit: they must bring home to the world the Gospel of Jesus Christ, and show the world of to-day wherein it fails to live according to the Gospel.

There are others, too, who, like Franciscan tertiaries, are bound by a special profession of the Gospel—members of other Third Orders and Associations. Let them all step forward and prove by their eager readiness in the cause of Jesus Christ their claim to be reckoned among the more favoured of His disciples. Everyone, the Gospel tells us, will be proved by his works. Not those who cry "Lord, Lord!"—even a thousand times a day—will be found among the chosen flock, but those who do the will of our Father in heaven. And the will of our Father in heaven is that all men be saved, that the Church be enlarged not merely in name but in reality, and that we each do our share to bring about the world's salvation.

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THE POPULAR USE OF THE SCRIPTURES

By FATHER ALPHONSUS, O.S.F.C.*

Of all the books that were ever penned the Bible is the most interesting. It is a Book springing from the intensest conviction of the mind, and consequently reveals the realities of life more vividly and truly than any other document that ever purposed to reveal hidden things or help mankind to understand themselves. Here in this Book, as Carlyle has somewhere said, for several thousand years the spirit of man has found light and nourishment and an interpreting response to whatever was deepest in him; and to him who will look well the mystery of existence reflects itself, if not resolved yet revealed and prophetically embalmed, if not to the satisfying of the outward sense, yet to the opening of the inward sense, which is a far grander result. Amidst all the revolutions of human thought it has remained absolutely unaffected, and stands to-day, as it ever did, the truest, because the most fundamental, of human histories. And though we are living in an age when reverence for the Bible cannot be called a characteristic, yet never were its pages more eagerly scanned, never was its message more critically examined than now. By sheer force of criticism it has been thrust into a position altogether unapproachable by any other book, and round it all that is earnest and serious in the human race should rally, for it is an arsenal of heavenly arms, as Leo XIII. calls it. It is our strength in weakness, our light in darkness, our hope in adversity.

* Read at the Catholic Conference, Stockport, 1899.

Our Holy Father said in his Encyclical of November 1893, "Let all understand how deeply the Sacred Books should be esteemed, and with what eagerness and reverence they should approach this arsenal of heavenly arms. But this is impossible unless the Scriptures are studied and read continuously."

It is no exaggeration to say that we have departed somewhat from primitive Christianity in assiduous reading of the Scriptures. Of course this may be accounted for to some extent, if we remember that theology was in those early times not elaborated into a science. Indeed, as soon as the Sentences of Peter Lombard appeared, and "because logical argument has been largely substituted to authority in the habits of mind of the period, the Bible, while losing nothing of the reverence that was wont to be paid to it, ceased to occupy its former position as a text round which all was gathered." And though we rejoice at the vast structure of theological science which was elaborated by the scholastics, we cannot but deplore the falling off in the general appreciation of the Bible which followed their works, and which was indeed the last thing they ever contemplated.

The Jews were the first to cultivate Scripture reading. The existence of their synagogues was due primarily to the fact that the law and the prophets were read at their meetings. With so much else that was Jewish, this custom passed to the Christians, and we find St. Paul telling Timothy "to attend unto reading, exhorting to doctrine till he came." St. Justin a hundred years later says, "Upon the day called Sunday all that live either in the city or country meet together in the same place, where the writings of the Apostles and Prophets are read as much as time will permit. When the reader has done the Bishop makes a sermon, wherein he instructs the people, and animates them to the practice of such beautiful precepts." Later on, when copies of the Scriptures were multiplied, rare as they must have been at all times in the early ages, we find St. Augustine exhorting the populace to read the Scriptures in preference to profane literature (Aug., *De Vera Religione*, 51); and St. Chrysostom asserts that it was a common practice among the faithful, and tells them how they are to profit by the

practice. Sometimes he exhorts them to read beforehand the portion of the Scriptures he was going to explain on the following day, and he goes so far as to speak of the habitual reading of the Scriptures as an ordinary duty of Christian life (Hom. ii, Matthew). St. Jerome recommends the Scriptures no less strongly when he says, "They are the light and life of the soul, its daily nutriment. Who knoweth not the Scriptures knoweth not Christ himself."

From these quotations we can see what part the Scriptures were supposed to take in the opinion of the Fathers in the formation of the Christian mind. I know it may be urged that we Catholics acknowledge no obligation of reading the Bible. That is a question which is not contemplated in this paper. We are speaking of the Bible as an adjunct to religion. The Church can do little for the redemption of mankind unless the fruits of redemption are brought into contact with individual minds, for religion is personal and if the Bible teaches men to realize better the responsibility of personal conduct, if it makes them feel more really an individual conscience, we have gained much, and have wrought an element of seriousness into religion, which is just what is necessary to redeem us from the curse of artificial or mechanical conduct which is an increasing danger in civilization. Here we are not concerned with the possibility of a man doing without the Bible. The question before us is, does a man lose or gain by not reading his Bible?

Admitting that the Church is his guide, there can be no doubt that a man loses much by not reading his Bible, since after the Church it is the most direct message of God to the human race, and therefore it is better to have the Church and a knowledge of the Bible than to have the Church without that knowledge.

Man's aspiration ought to be towards total perfection. This he strives for in many devious ways, and anything which helps him to be serious in this pursuit must be acclaimed as a boon he may not lightly despise. Now perfection is impossible if a man is not in touch with the main current of human life. This it is which disciplines him, re-shapes and forms him; for the facts of existence are God's hammers in the forge of life,

and a knowledge of the Bible quickens his religious instincts as scarcely any other study can. For here he comes into personal, almost living contact with the main facts of life, and realizes more quickly duty and the obligations of existence; that action is demanded from him, not speculation, for to *do* is man's object in life, not to theorize. And unless a man, by some such study as the Bible, does really reflect upon his duty as a religious being, he is apt to be content with mere speculation, and his religion is too often mere mechanical or unthinking adhesion to certain phases of life rather than that real personal service God demands from every free and intelligent being.

The Bible is, as Goethe called it, the Book of Nations. It is a record of the doings of men who touched life at every point. It is an historical record of God's revelation through His action on men, and as such must always be the most elevating study that can possibly engage our attention, and certainly the most inspiring we can commend to the people at large, for it is a history of themselves, which it is most desirable that they should realize, reflected in the very mirror which the Almighty holds before the face of humanity.

A desire to augment the excellence of nature is implanted in all men. This instinct ought to be fostered by every means, and there can be no study better calculated to foster this instinct than the study of the Bible, for herein is a record of the acquisition of perfection gradually emerging into being from the trials and difficulties incident to human nature. Perfection is unattainable unless we strive to make reason and the Will of God prevail, and the difficulty which immediately confronts us here is that too often the readers of the Bible have made their own vain imaginings the rule by which they strove for perfection. This is the danger of every individual life: it is the fault of Protestants when they read their Bibles. It is neither reason nor the Will of God that guides them. It is some notional or sentimental excellence which, however honestly acquired, cannot produce the same effects as if they had really been put in touch with the unfailing guidance of God. They reject all authority, and will not admit that it is necessary to have a guide in reading the Bible, and

hence what they take for the Will of God is too often nothing but their own vain devisings.

For Catholics this danger cannot exist. For us the Church is our guide and teacher in all fundamentals and articles of faith; and even Protestants are coming now to see that the first principle of Christian society is based, not upon the existence of the Bible but of the Church. Canon Gore, who has said many things for which we may be thankful, admits that it is becoming "more and more difficult to believe in the Bible without believing in the Church," and Professor Robertson Smith says in another connection: "To say that God speaks to all mankind without the use of a revealing agency reduces religion to mysticism." There is a positive element in all religion, an element learnt from our predecessors. Indeed, the principle of individual judgment is not a principle of perfection in religion at all. For if a man isolates himself, or if the principle on which he builds his life tends to isolate him, he is working backwards instead of forwards; it is only as he forms part of a great whole that he can arrive at perfection. The individual is required, under pain of stunting his growth, to perfect himself by means of the society in which he dwells, to do all he can to increase the sum total of life, or to make reason and the will of God prevail the more. And this Bible reading under the Church helps forward, for it promotes the religious disposition. It cannot be said that the Church, by insisting on our direction in any way minimizes the effect of individual effort, for after all what does she do, in her ultimate decisions, but voice the belief of the Church, which is the *sensus communis* of the people among whom the Holy Ghost dwells. If she has ever legislated about the reading of the Scriptures it was concerning their pernicious use; and though to us the laws made at the Reformation period may seem stringent, yet we must remember they were evoked by a crisis, and when the Church was, so to speak, in a state of siege. Every means, therefore, within her power she was bound to take in order to preserve the citadel of Truth and save the people from destruction. That emergency has now passed, and Leo XIII. recommends the study of the Bible, and gives an indulgence to all who will spend some time in the reading of the Scriptures

daily (see p. 16). Bible reading, too, in some measure helps forward the work of the Holy Ghost in the Church. Gregory the Great says that the spiritual science of the Hebrew Fathers grew. For Moses was more instructed in the science of God than Abraham; the prophets were more so than Moses; the apostles more so than the prophets. And the same progression may be predicated of the Church, though, of course, in another sense, and concerned with another object. The Church at large must be continually learning by experience the wider application of the spiritual science which comes to us from revelation, and nothing could possibly happen to the Church which would more retard the work of the Holy Ghost than religious inertia. God is the very source of life, its conserving energy, and it is given to each to assimilate what he can of that Almighty Will. Every age has its own moral probation, from which it emerges either better or worse; and a mere mechanical adhesion to God can scarcely be the most responsive to the promptings of the Holy Ghost. Free and intelligent service is God's best adjunct for making His law prevail increasingly in life, and the more we personally realize God's revelation to man, as contained in the Bible, the more we apprehend the increasing application of God's message to man. It is not by checking thought, it is not by external unification, or any amount of artificial discipline that the Kingdom of God can be realized in life, but it is personal devotion to truths revealed to us by God in the Bible which will hasten its fuller dominion in life.

It has been said that the characteristic of Protestant countries, such as England, where the people have been formed on the Bible, is their religious one-sidedness, and that what they gain in religious personal conviction and intensity they lose in totality of development. That may be so. Let it be granted that they are pedantic in the use of the Bible, that they discuss ignorantly what they read, still it engenders in them a spirit for serious reality. It is the mind concerning itself about God, and that is the great gain one must look at. Since they had not the Church, it was better for them to have the Bible than to be deprived of it altogether. This at least did in some measure supply the deficiency they experienced in

not having the Infallible Church to guide them. Against us Catholics, who recommend Bible reading, the same charge cannot be made, for the Church moderates and guides us, and self-discipline and self-mastery are no small gain in the harmonious development of the soul. Instead of a man battling to make his own ideas prevail, he can, by being in touch with the main current of Christian life, accept that which has commended itself to others, and which by assimilating he can use to satisfy his own religious ideas, and thus by orderly progression help forward the attainment of that totality to which he aspires.

It is quite certain that many of our English working class are forsaking the Bible. This is to be deplored as much in the interests of the nation as of the race. Bible reading in England has not been all one might desire in its effects upon religion, but one thing is certain, it did, generally speaking, make the people realize personally what religion was. And the great gain to English public life has been that this reading of the Bible by the common people has made the nation realize better perhaps than it could otherwise have done personal righteousness, and so enabled them to escape the pit-fall of a mere mechanical worship. I cannot say that Protestants of any country in the present generation owe their religious earnestness to the reading of the Bible. They are living on their past. Still, it is a past which was nurtured on the Bible, that which engendered the spirit of serious personal responsibility. We, therefore, under the guidance of the Church, may take a lesson from this, "Whatsoever things are good those hold," and if Bible reading induces this habit of religious earnestness let us cherish it as a gift of God. It is possible, nay, it is certain, that every boon to the human race acts disastrously on many individuals who are unprepared to receive it, and, as Goethe has said, "All which merely frees our spirit without giving us command over ourselves is deleterious," still, though individual defections may come through weakness, through the frivolous or materialized human being, we may yet hope that the general tone which would be begotten by the practice here recommended would react even on these decadents.

There are many who, mindful of the shipwreck to Faith which came in other days from interpreting the Bible as one wished, now view with apprehension the reading of the Bible. They fear, especially in the light of present discoveries, that Faith may be weakened thereby. I am not unmindful of St. Peter's assertion that many wrest the Scriptures to their own destruction. This is always possible to one who has not the Infallible Church to guide him. But what is really meant by this objection nowadays is that people are more liberal-minded in their views of Scripture, and that the traditional aspects of many things are now commonly rejected. The days of Creation are taken in another sense. Geology shows quite a different process of creation to that traditionary system which was formerly taught; evolution claims an origin for man and animals different to that described in Genesis; the Deluge, the Tower of Babel, the history of Josue and Samson have now other readings among the critics; and some of the Books in the Bible are not as old as they were thought to be. Without saying anything on this subject as to my own personal opinions, I merely remark that the science of the schools to-day is the commonplace of to-morrow, and I shall quote Father Hogan, who says, "Science in itself appeals only to the mind, and diverts attention from the soul, which it affects, if at all, but indirectly; yet, in the interests of piety itself, the Bible must be studied scientifically like any other object of human knowledge. After all, edification must rest ultimately on Truth. Scripture is valuable only because it places man's mind in contact with the mind of God, but this he can only do if he study it aright." And speaking further on of the traditionary interpretation of Scripture in the light of present-day science, he says: "The system had to yield in many points to the pressure of accumulated facts. One after another, positions which were deemed vital were given up. After all, St. Augustine had foreseen such a possibility and provided for it *(vel necessitas requirat)*. The necessity had come and the concessions were made slowly, grudgingly, but they were made; and, as St. Augustine had said, 'Whatever they can demonstrate to be true of physical nature, we must show to be capable of reconciliation with our Scriptures,' the latter were

read afresh and found capable of new and scientific meanings" (Hogan, *Clerical Studies*, 471). Things are what they are; why then should we desire to see them otherwise? To cut one's self off from the main current of intellectual life may be a remedy for some to preserve their faith; but to assert this as a principle of life is to preach intellectual suicide. The wider reaches of God's action on the race can only be seen by courting investigation, and by admitting what are proved to be facts. We cannot doubt where the trend of knowledge has led us, and in all cases we have been the gainers by the stupendous light poured out upon us. We must read God's revelations side by side with His creation, and the interpretation of Scripture which ignorance of science alone made possible is for the future an absolute impossibility. The power of the Bible, of course, does not consist in this, that it makes us read science anew. The power of the Bible has always been in the immense emotion it has excited in those who read it reverently. It engages in the government of man's conduct all the forces of his being. Its whole tenor is taken up with man's conduct. What avail science, art, culture, if they do not contribute to this end? The cultivation of physical science can never be a substitute for that more fundamental science which we call Religion. And there is a danger in our present modes of education which we must ever keep present to our minds, and that is that the spirit of the world is being increasingly fostered to the rejection of religion for which it can never prove a substitute. If Bible reading is cultivated, we have at least done one thing to keep before our eyes the fact that religion is better than science, and that to know God is far greater than to know all science.

Truth comes to us in many ways from teachings, practices, writings; but if we would go back to the source whence they all spring, we must return to the Bible. Herein the Fathers and Saints have learned those truths which they preached, and which have been the vivifying principles of the life of succeeding ages. The devout reading of these sacred books is not a study. To the devout mind critical difficulties have no existence. The human element vanishes; we are in the

presence of God; it is, as the Fathers have called it, a letter addressed from Heaven to earth. As literature, it is the most marvellous in the world, and, in spite of its age and the dissimilar civilization in which it saw its origin, it is of all books the nearest to our spirits. It is the supreme devotional literature of the world, filled with the deepest sense of the mystery of God, replete with the sense of suffering, full of the highest transport of religious emotion or meditation, and as a literature it is without parallel in its conception of God, its sense of sin, its conception of man. It is the heirloom of the race, which they are the poorer by not studying.

THE READING OF THE SCRIPTURES

By B. F. C. COSTELLOE, M.A.*

If I had had to speak publicly on this subject twenty years ago I should have spoken in some embarrassment, for, unless I am much mistaken, neither the use of the Bible in Catholic homes, nor the methods of teaching it in Catholic schools, was in those days all that the friends of the Church could desire. We all know that the common Protestant calumnies are, and always were, absurd. There has never been, so far as I know history, any justification for saying that the Church kept the Bible from the people, or forbade them to read it, even in countries where churchmen were less liberal-minded than they have been in the English-speaking world. Still less is there any excuse for the curious theory—still maintained by many honest fanatics—that such a suppression or concealment of the Bible was meant to prevent the faithful from finding out "the errors of Rome." If our traducers, instead of repeating old fables which were absurd, had found out some of the real weaknesses, not of our theory but of our practice, they might have made a much more plausible case. Now that the state of things has altered for the better, we may, perhaps, without imprudence, take account of earlier shortcomings. And it is the more legitimate to do so, because the blame of any falling short in the adequate use of the Bible in Catholic society ought to be laid to the charge, not of the Church, nor even of individual clergy, so much as of Protestantism itself.

It is unnecessary to repeat what the publications of the C.T.S. have so well demonstrated, that the wide publication and translation of the Sacred Scriptures after the invention of printing was a Catholic and not a Protestant work. The same clergy who had in earlier centuries spent lives of patient, reverent, and beautiful labour in copying the Scriptures with an accuracy almost

* Read at the Catholic Conference, Stockport, 1899.

incredible, so that copies might easily be had everywhere they were required, proceeded to spread the knowledge of the Word of God by the new means with equal zeal, and without the slightest idea that there could be anything but good in the multiplication of the sacred text. But the great ecclesiastical revolt, and the anarchy to which it rapidly led, produced a new danger and a natural prejudice. It is not at all, as later Protestants are kind enough to suppose, a question of danger to the dogmas or authority of the Church by reason of the "appeal to Scripture." I think most scholars now agree that if we are to weigh the creeds by a really complete and well-informed "appeal to Scripture," the Church has nothing to fear and everything to gain. But what did happen was that the new sectaries, whose personal taste in theological opinions tended to the wildest variety, invented what I may call the *worship of texts*. We may hear the same thing even now in certain well-meaning Evangelical circles, and it has always seemed to me to be very hard to realize the state of mind of those who suffer from it. The idea seems to be that since the Bible is "the Word of God," any one word or sentence of it, torn from its context and interpreted according to the individual's personal fancy, ought to be received as conclusive proof of the most startling doctrines.

It was this idea that did the whole mischief. The Catholic view of the Bible, if I may be allowed to say so, is eminently *sane*. We are bound, as of faith, to believe not only that it is in all its parts inspired, but that it is a work—a chain of writings—of which God Himself is the author. It contains, therefore, in a unique sense, God's revelation of Himself to men. But it is not the *only* revelation, nor is it in itself an isolated, non-human fact —as it were a Table of Stone come down from the inaccessible mountain. Divine as is its authorship, it was the providential purpose that it should arise as a part of the world's literature, written by human hands and passed through human minds, which were indeed guided so far as was needful for the Divine purpose, but were otherwise acting after the natural manner of their time, their nation, their personality, their customary ways of speech, and appropriate means of knowledge. Hence, the Catholic, while he reverences his Bible at least as

highly as the Evangelical, regards the text, not as a fetish, but as a factor in the providential history of humanity. To each verse and text the inspiration obviously extends; but when we come to ask how each verse and text is to be interpreted, what are their relations to each other and to the other sources of knowledge, whether by the great Christian tradition or by the light of really demonstrated science, we enter on a vast and most delicate inquiry, which can only be pursued in the light of the whole revelation of God, and which (as should, I think, be obvious to all sane men who believe in a revelation at all) can only be pursued *safely* under the allegiance and authority of the Living Voice which Christ left in the world.

The anarchy of private and usually ignorant exegesis, in a word, was one of the chief evils which Luther let loose on the western world; and to keep that from spreading among populations still Catholic, checks and safeguards had to be devised. And out of this state of things there arose, in some countries, a temper, not rational nor right, but yet intelligible—which a caustic critic travestied in the saying that some Catholics thought the Bible was a Protestant book. That, of course, was a jest and a libel. But I think it was quite true, in my own youth, that there was not that enthusiasm among Catholics for either the reading or teaching of the Bible text which, let us say, Father Kenelm Vaughan would like to see. People had Bibles, at least many had. But they lay in some place of honour, and were not often opened unless it were to register births or deaths. I have known a case in which the spiritual director of a great convent school thought it right to warn the pupils against using the Bible as a book for spiritual reading; and in so saying he made no distinction between the Old Testament and the New, and no exception in favour of any of the books which will immediately occur to everybody's mind. As for teaching in school courses, I believe we may fairly say that Catholic children were taught a certain amount of Bible history, but it was almost always out of text-books, and not, even when it was a question of the Gospels, out of the inspired text. Of these text-books I hesitate to speak freely; for I am well aware that it is a task of enormous

difficulty to write a really good schoolbook of Bible history for elementary pupils. I, for my part, have never seen one; and if I may speak rather of the manuals in use in other lands, I can only say what was said openly and emphatically at the Fribourg Congress, that the constant repetition in all the common French manuals of statements about the age of the world and other matters, which no educated theologian now maintains, must involve for the pupils grave danger when they go out into the world. I should be very sorry to take on my conscience the responsibility of teaching my children such views — with the very same insistence and authority with which they were taught the vital truths of the faith—when I know that in a few years' time they will find the one set of statements to be quite untenable, and will thereby be placed in obvious risk of doubting the other statements also.

I rejoice greatly, however, to see that in recent years, not only here but everywhere, a very different state of things is arising. The great readiness with which it has been found possible to sell decent editions of the New Testament, or separate Gospels, at cheap prices, is itself a notable sign, and leads naturally to new issues and further sales. I remember many years ago a northern Catholic Bishop, being attacked by a Bible Society orator, replied that if the Society would find the funds he would be charmed to put a copy of the Catholic Bible in every Catholic household in his diocese. I know not whether any Catholic of apostolic zeal will come forward with any funds for such distribution, but I fancy this Society would be very willing to co-operate.

I am, however, able to tell you what many may not know, that that very work has just been begun, of all places, in Naples—where a zealous priest has had an excellent Italian version of St. Matthew printed (at a price of less than 2d.), and is appealing for help to distribute it broadcast.

Equally is it matter for rejoicing that the Catholic schools are demanding, and are obtaining, serious Catholic commentaries on those points at least of the sacred text which are chiefly used for school examinations. The work which Monsignor Ward alone has done in the production of scholarly and modern school editions of the Gospels is an enormous advance; and

parallel with it we have also the texts on which the Jesuits and the Benedictines collaborate. It would be well if every Catholic here would turn over the pages of Monsignor Ward's St. Luke or of Father Rickaby's St. John, and then compare them with the inefficient and unsuitable "annotations" which it has been the custom to hand on from one printer to another as a sort of illusory satisfaction of the Church laws that forbid at present the issue to the unlearned of an unannotated text. The compliance with the rule was, in my humble opinion, purely illusory. The rule itself is a most wholesome one; but I for one should not be sorry if the Congregation of the Index had enforced it more rationally by putting pressure on Catholic Bishops and publishers to provide not merely "notes," but notes seriously calculated to help the simpler sort of reader to understand the text where it is difficult or obscure. I hope it is not too much to expect that this good beginning, which has its parallels in France and America, may extend. At present, it is largely a matter of preparing for the Oxford and Cambridge Examinations. But will not the editors, now they have begun, go on to give us a decently annotated edition of the Epistles of St. Paul—so constantly misread not only by Protestants but by Catholics themselves? And could we not have, what is in a sense more needful than all, an intelligible edition of that glorious possession of the Church—the Book of Psalms? And is it too much to ask that, if only for "spiritual reading," someone will give us an Isaiah, with the most necessary notes? And might we not have a little help to rescue from practical oblivion that matchless poem, the Book of Job? Of the Pentateuch and the historical works I say nothing. There are text-books for seminary use which could be condensed for popular usage, but probably the time has not yet come.

As such works come to exist and to be known, I am satisfied that the Catholic schools—not only Secondary, but Primary—will come more and more to do what they ought never to have left undone—that is, to teach at least the New Testament history from the inspired text itself. For my part, I should go a great deal further. I desire to see the day when, instead of a dry recital of Old Testament *data* in commonplace schoolbook form

(which is neither impressive nor interesting), we may have at least a *catena* of selected sections of the grand story as it is told in the Old Testament books, so that even school children may not be wholly unfamiliar with these incomparable documents. Non-Catholic selections of such a kind exist, and I know of no obstacle to the preparation of a Catholic one, to which no rational objection could be taken. Canon Wenham's selections are not to be forgotten; but are they as much in use as they ought to be?

The Holy Father has added to the infinite catalogue of his good deeds by directly commending to all Catholics the custom of reading the Gospels; and by attaching an indulgence to the regular practice of it as a daily use, he has shown that he does not mean it to be a mere formal act. This Papal act is most notable, and ought to be of especial interest in countries like this, where we are told that the Popes are the bitter enemies of Bible-reading; and I cannot more fitly conclude this paper than by printing the Decree in full:—

Our Most Holy Lord, Pope Leo XIII., in an audience held on December 10, 1898, by the undersigned Cardinal Prefect of the Congregation of Indulgences and Sacred Relics, graciously granted to all the faithful in Christ, of either sex, who piously and devoutly, for at least a quarter of an hour, read the Holy Gospel, from an edition which has been recognized and approved by lawful authority, an Indulgence of 300 days to be gained once a day; but to those who have every day for a whole month given their time to the aforesaid reading as above, be granted a Plenary Indulgence, to be gained on any day within the month on which they shall with true repentance have gone to Confession and been refreshed by Holy Communion, and at the same time shall have poured out pious prayers to God for the intention of his Holiness. And these Indulgences the same Holy Father declared may be applied to the souls detained in the fire of purgatory. These presents to be perpetually valid without the issuing of any Brief, anything contrary notwithstanding.

Given at Rome the 13th day of December 1898.

Fr. HIER. M. Card. GOTTI, *Prefect.*

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A Chat in the Train.

By F. B. LORD.

As I was standing on the platform at P—— Station, an old friend suddenly clapped me on the back, jerking out all my dignity, and exclaiming:—"Hullo, old fellow! Where are you off to? Haven't seen you for such a time. I'm going down west."

"So am I," I rejoined when I had sufficient breath "We can have a talk on old times. Here's a carriage, let us secure two corner seats."

We entered and made ourselves comfortable, and talked over a lot of matters interesting to our two selves—our families, friends, belongings, tastes, occupations, and the like.

After a pause my friend suddenly asked, "By the by, is it true? There was a report about a year or so ago that you had gone over to Rome."

"It's quite true that I became a Catholic, but I hope it won't make any difference to our friendship, although some of my old friends regard me with a little suspicion; they are more polite than friendly, more reserved than affable, they seem to have a certain shyness and constraint in talking to me about everyday subjects. I often catch them glancing at me when they think I am not looking, as though they expected to see some visible and mysterious difference in me; but on the other hand, some are quite as cordial and sincere as formerly. Mind you, I don't in the least complain; if there is anyone to blame, I alone am guilty of disturbing the regard of my friends."

"You must excuse the question, but what on earth made

you change your religion, when you had everything you could possibly wish for with us?"

"Well, that would be rather a long story; but I presume you would hardly call your existence satisfactory if you had cause to come to the conclusion that your body was without your head."

"But our body is not without a head; first of all of course our Lord is the head; then on earth we have the Queen for temporalities, and the Archbishop of Canterbury for spiritualities."

"The Queen in Council, that is the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council, overrides the decisions of the Archbishop, who has to acknowledge before his Sovereign that he holds the office, both the spiritualities and temporalities, only of the Crown. What authority have either of your earthly heads for assuming any kind of headship?"

"Our Church has appointed and recognized them; that is sufficient for us."

"Do you blame the Nonconformists for having separated from you?"

"O yes; they are schismatics, cut off from our Church."

"I fail to see any difference between you. When England was Catholic she acknowledged St. Peter's successor as her only head. You deliberately allowed yourselves to be decapitated. You foreswore the jurisdiction of the only spiritual head appointed by Christ, and you re-formed yourselves as another separate independent body under a head of your own making. This is schism pure and simple; it is what you blame the Nonconformists for—separation without your authority."

"We separated from you on account of intolerable abuses."

"If that were so the Nonconformists claim the same justification; they separated from you for the same reason; and others have separated from them, propagating schism, till your example has fructified, and we see about a hundred and fifty sects."

"I will look up the subject before I meet you again."

"Let me recommend you some excellent books, which you will find very interesting, if you only put prejudice on one side."

"Do you mean Anglican books?"

"Certainly not; no Anglican books have any indisputable or official authority to speak for all your Church."

"But I never read purely Roman books!"

"Then how is it possible you can study the subject without prejudice? If you were a judge, would your decision be impartial if you only heard one side? And if not impartial, would it be an honest judgement."

"Perhaps not; but would you read our books?"

"I have read great numbers of them, but none of them affect my case."

"Why, how is that? We have some most able men, great scholars, of undoubted piety and learning. Surely some of their arguments must touch you."

"No, they don't in the slightest, I will tell you why; I am so completely positive, so absolutely sure of the divine origin of our Church, of the jurisdiction of our Holy Father the Pope, of the infallibility of the Church, the living Body of Christ, that arguments on detail do not affect me in the slightest."

"But we are just as sure of our position."

"Not in the same way. I will give you a reason. Anglicans always pray that they may find the truth—Catholics never: because they know they have it, know they can always get a true decision from their living Church. You are all independently trying to find out the truth each for himself, and you can never tell for certain whether you have succeeded or not."

"That is a necessity, because the truth of many things will not be revealed to us till the Judgement."

"But all spiritual doctrines necessary for the soul's health and salvation have been revealed by God the Holy Ghost to His Church; they are God's truth, and can never change."

"The doctrines taught by our Church are equally true. For surely you do not go so far as to suggest that our Church knowingly teaches error?"

"It places me in a great difficulty to answer that question."

"Ah, my friend! I thought it would, but you ought to give me an answer."

"My only difficulty is this—to know how to spare your

feelings, which are just as honest and honourable and sensitive as mine."

"You know me too well to fear that I shall take offence at a general argument."

"Then I fear I must say something very distasteful to your feelings, if I am to tell you why I left the Anglican Establishment."

"I excuse you beforehand: hit as hard as you like!"

"Well then, judge for yourself. Do you assign any particular importance to the doctrine of the Keys—that is the binding or loosing of sin by a priest—and to the doctrine of the Real Presence of Christ in the Sacrament of the Altar?"

"About these two subjects my own opinion is——"

"No, I mean the teaching of your Church."

"The doctrine of the Keys is certainly hotly disputed; so is the doctrine of the Presence of Christ in the Holy Sacrament. It would not do to lay down a hard and fast rule: our Church does not demand a slavish obedience to her teaching."

"But what is her authoritative teaching on these two most important points?"

"I must allow they are open questions."

"Do you mean that they are of no importance?"

"O dear me no! they are of the greatest importance."

"Is it not a patent fact that part of your clergy teach the doctrine of the Keys as the truth of God, and part of your clergy say that it is totally impossible for a man to convey God's forgiveness, or to judge when that forgiveness is necessary, or to withhold forgiveness from any man? Do not part of your clergy teach that the Body and Blood of Christ are in the Sacrament of the Altar, and part of them deny the truth of this assumption?"

"Certainly many of our clergy teach those views, but many oppose them."

"By what authority?"

"Their conscience."

"We can hardly speak of these most important doctrines as views; they are either truths or falsehoods, either sacra-

ments or blasphemous fables—there is nothing half way. The question is not what the Anglican Church allows her teachers to teach according to each man's conscience, but what she requires all her members to believe as God's truth."

"The Church of England allows a certain latitude, a wise liberality on these subjects."

"There can be no latitude or liberality with regard to truth : it must either be wholly and entirely true, or blasphemously false. A doctrine is either true, or only a matter of opinion —it cannot be both at the same time."

"Differences of opinion must exist even about the most sacred subjects, and what is true to one man may be false to another."

"This may be applicable to human science, but it cannot apply to God's revelation of truth to man. God says that we must have faith, that we must believe ;—believe what ? Why, what He tells us—that is truth ; and what I assert is, that your Church allows one man to teach a particular doctrine as the truth of God—not merely as an abstraction, or private conscience, but as God's truth, and at the same time allows another man to teach, I don't say merely to hold, but to teach with all the authority your Church can give—its negation, its contradiction. There is absolutely no authority to decide which is true, and which is false."

"I can only say that we must be content as we are till an Anglican Synod, or something of that kind, shall settle and determine what is right and what is wrong for us to believe."

"And do you believe that any Anglican Synod could possibly come to any definite agreement, even on the two subjects I have indicated, could agree to a simple, honest, plain definition which every one could understand without any mistake : that they could agree to impose this belief for acceptance on all the members of the Church of England ? And do you believe that all the members of the Church of England would agree to accept, and hold, and teach these definitions as God's truth, not man's ?"

"It is certainly most highly improbable."

"Would the clergy and laity be content to give up their private judgement, the very backbone of their system."

"Of course not. But what is your backbone?"

"Authority."

"Give me some explanation of it."

"The Holy Catholic Church is the pillar and ground of the truth, founded by Christ, who appointed St. Peter as her first visible head: 'Thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my Church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.' St. Peter was appointed the Shepherd of the One True Fold, and to him were given the keys of Christ's spiritual kingdom, the Church. Therefore it is necessary for everyone, sheep and lambs of Christ's fold, to live in obedience to the authority of Christ's Shepherd. There is one baptism, and all who are baptized, of every nation, of every century, owe obedience to the Pope, as he is the lawful successor of St. Peter, and the living representative of Christ's authority over the souls of Christian men. So, when I came to review my position as an Anglican, I saw that I was not in harmony with the Chief Shepherd of the one true fold; that I was pledged and belonged to a system which was in direct antagonism to that one fold, a system which had deliberately rejected the supremacy and jurisdiction of the ancient faith which dates from Pentecost, and which alone has been acknowledged from then till now as the one Catholic Church. Was it safe for me to rest content in that equivocal position? If it was absolutely necessary for my soul's salvation to believe God's truth, who was to convince me? Where was the authority—the unquestionable living teaching authority? What was the use of my appealing to the very best, the greatest scholar, the holiest Anglican clergyman, who could only tell me what he himself believed? He has absolutely no kind of authority to say positively and clearly 'This is God's truth, that is a falsehood,' without being liable to contradiction from an equally good and clever clergyman of another party. When I considered the Catholic Church I found everything was quite plain, easy, simple, logical, natural. Certain doctrines had been defined by the Church, and acknowledged by all her children as indisputable truths that all must believe, that none can doubt, and these must remain true to all eternity. Outside of these defined doctrines there are other teachings

which are called pious opinions, upon which the Church has not set her seal."

"Stop a bit, my friend. What right has your Church to lay down a doctrine as an absolute, unquestionable, and incontrovertible truth? That is what we call one of the pretensions of Rome."

"There is abundant evidence, which you can read for yourself; I will only touch on a few of the subjects. Christ appointed the Church as the one true fold to embrace all His sheep and lambs, appointed it to preserve His truth, to reveal His will to man, to teach all nations to the end of time by His authority. So the Church teaches us the Catholic Faith. God promised that His Holy Spirit should abide in the Church for ever to teach us all things concerning the Will of God; and therefore that Church is holy, therefore it is the pillar and ground of the truth, therefore it cannot err in its teaching, or in its decisions, because it is guided by the indwelling presence of the Holy Ghost. Therefore to hear the Church is to hear God, to despise the Church is to despise God, for Christ is the Head of the Body, the Church."

"And why may not this apply to our Church as well as to yours?"

"Is your Church one body, one faith, one communion with ours?"

"Obviously not; they are certainly very different bodies, contradictory faiths, rival communions."

"Yet we read--'One body, and one spirit, as you are called in one hope of your calling, one Lord, one Faith, one Baptism, one God and Father of us all.' Then what justification had you at the Reformation for setting up a different body, a contradictory faith, a rival communion, a purely human jurisdiction and supremacy, against the only one appointed by God?"

"Perhaps men were blinded and carried away by passion."

"But *you* are not!"

"I? What has it to do with me?"

"Ask your conscience."

"It seems impossible that your Church can be infallible, and never liable to error, after what we read in history."

"And yet 'Christ loved the Church, and delivered Himself up for it, that He might sanctify it, cleansing it . . . . . that He might present it to Himself a glorious Church, not having spot or wrinkle, or any such thing, but that it should be holy and without blemish.'"

"Yes, yes; but we know well enough that some of your popes, prelates, and priests were not untainted with worldliness."

"Judas, one of the twelve, betrayed his Master. Did he compromise the reputation of Christ? Can a human being compromise a Divine Faith? The Church herself is incapable of being affected by individuals, as she is divine, without spot or blemish in herself, founded on the Rock, the pillar and ground of the truth, the Church of the living God, the body of Christ."

My friend, I thought, seemed a little relieved when the gradual slowing of the train and the noisy commotion of a station gave him a pretext for resting awhile from our chat, and for looking out of the window at the busy scene. When the train was fairly on its way again he broke silence with an abrupt question.

"Now tell me, do you go to confession?"

"Of course I do."

"I shouldn't like that, the idea is horrible."

"Why so? Give me some reasons."

"In the first place it would be rather nervous work, with a lot of people looking on at you, as you go into those cupboards. Then, it would be an awful bother to be always thinking that if you do this, or say that, you will have to repeat it in confession. Then you would have the feeling that the priest thought badly of you. Then I should imagine that you would get hardened to sin, when you can so easily get rid of it."

"I will take your objections in order. First, you wouldn't like it. No one likes it, you don't go to confession for the pleasure of it. It is a duty; the Church tells us that it is the ordinary means appointed by God for obtaining His forgiveness. You don't consult a doctor, or put yourself under the knife of a surgeon for the pleasure of it. Then you say that you would be nervous going to confession before people; you would very soon think nothing of that when you know that all good Catholics go regularly to confession. But will it not be worse at the Judgement, when the dead, small and great, stand before the throne, for those who have never had their sins pardoned to go to confession before all the world? Then you say it would be an awful bother to be always on your guard against sin. The question is whether you prefer sin to

the bother; if the bother saves you from sin I should call it a most valuable advantage. You are not absolutely obliged to mention every small failing, but if you hide a mortal sin in confession it is one of the gravest offences you can commit. Your next objection is that the priest would think badly of you. He would naturally think much worse of you if you didn't go to confession; but it is not a question of what the priest may think of you, but what God knows of you. If you confess something bad a priest does not throw up his hands and exclaim 'How very sad!' The very fact of your confessing a bad sin makes the priest very tender with you, and he is able to help you far better than anyone else, because he has special training for his holy work, he has constant experience, and his object is to help a penitent, not to frighten him; to cure him of his disease, and to grant him God's forgiveness, not to think badly of him. Then as to confession making you hard, that is a great mistake, as it brings grace; but of course a great deal depends upon the disposition of the penitent; if he was hardened although going to confession, may we not suppose that he would be much more so if he did not go to confession?"

"I could never bring myself to go to confession."

"Why not? If you had very good reasons for believing that God's pardon was absolutely necessary, and that if you left your sins unpardoned, although God had given you a simple and sure remedy, you would be lost at the Judgement, then I should imagine you would not only go, but be eager to go to confession."

"And do you believe that the priest can convey God's pardon for sin?"

"Every priest receives this power by his ordination, though he does not exercise it except with the approval of the Bishop.

"But a priest is only——"

"A minister of Christ, a steward of the mysteries of God."

"But do the Bishops and the priests themselves go to confession?"

"Indeed they do, and more frequently than the majority of laymen."

"And does the Pope also go to confession?"

"Of course he does. He, like the rest of men, has his soul to save, and needs the help of the sacraments."

"But the Pope is infallible?"

"True: but what has that to do with confession?"

"I thought an infallible man could do no wrong!"

"That would be to make the Pope impeccable—unable to do wrong! The Pope is only human; he has his own failings and shortcomings by which he may offend God. Just as in conversation, or even in the pulpit, he might make a mistake in theology. At no time is he impeccable; and it is only when as Shepherd and Teacher of all Christians he defines a doctrine concerning Faith or Morals that he cannot err, because he is assisted by the Holy Ghost who dwells in God's Church to lead men into all truth. I will send you some books on these subjects if you care to know what we believe."

"I would rather not, as they might unsettle me."

"But you are unsettled now; you have no definite faith, only a general acceptance of a system which pledges you to nothing. You are in a sort of dream; I want you to wake up to the reality. Now you roam through a desert of views, compromises, theories, aspirations, latitudes, contradictions, and private judgement. As long as I was an Anglican I never could call myself settled; everything about me was unsettled, and naturally I was unsettled too. I was living in a house founded on the quicksands. From year to year my 'views' shifted. My creed was a mixture of God's truth and 'damnable heresy,' and there was no authority external to my conscience to teach me certainty. I give you credit for wishing to form a true judgement, then why not study our explanations of God's Faith?"

"Very well, I will read your books in order to refute you."

"It is not fair to take them up with hostile intentions; try and put prejudice aside as much as you can, and read them with a mind open to form an honest and true judgement."

"I should like to ask you another question: is it true that you Romans worship the Virgin Mary?"

"What do you mean by worship?"

"What most people mean, the service we pay to God."

"No Catholic worships Mary in such a manner."

"But you do worship her; every one says so."

"We honour, venerate, and love her whom all generations shall call Blessed; you may call it worship; but it is not the same as the adoration we pay to almighty God: that accusation is only ignorant superstition of our enemies. There is the old English meaning of worship, 'his Worship the Mayor,' 'the Worshipful Company of, etc.,' and in your marriage service, 'with my body I thee worship' But our worship or veneration of Mary is more real and ardent than this. We treat her as our Mother, who is not separated from her Divine Son; we have an immense affection, a burning love for her such as those outside the Church cannot imagine, or comprehend. She has always been venerated and worshipped in this way from the beginning of Christianity."

"But your cultus of the Blessed Virgin is considered extravagant and excessive by us, and I feel sure that some of your people who are ignorant must frequently fall into an idolatrous worship of her, not perhaps realizing it."

"And what is her position among Anglicans? Is it not a hopeless confusion? Some love her tenderly and sincerely, but others, alas! belittle Christ's Mother, and either despise her, or even treat her with rude insinuations. Can anything more extravagant be imagined then that such a confusion of views should be the authorised explanation of her position among you?"

"We may hold any view we please of her position so long as we can prove it from the Bible."

"Precisely; it is a matter of private judgement, not a matter of definite teaching, therefore one man's view is as good as another's. Surely, my good friend, the Bible must be a paradox to you when it demands your assent to the fact that as 'the Church is the pillar and ground of the truth,' you are to 'hear the Church.'"

"But why do you give the Blessed Virgin such a prominent place in your devotions?"

"Consider what Mary is in the sight of God; such she is in the sight of the Catholic Church; the Mother of Christ, God the Son. She bore Him, she nourished Him, she brought Him

up through infancy and boyhood to manhood, she tended Him, she received obedience from Him. What is she to us? A sinless Mother, a sympathetic listener, a powerful advocate in all our needs; therefore we love and venerate her, and beg her to pray for us sinners. The ignorant peasant, the throned monarch, the intellectual philosopher, unite in their veneration of Mary Mother of God. What distinguishes their mode of veneration! Only a matter of taste; the bespangled necklace of the one, the costly shrine of another, the soul-stirring fervency of one, the poetic rhapsody of another, all mean the same thing — that we are united with Jesus in our affection for His and our most loving Mother."

"Well, all I can say is that I don't understand it; to me it is forced and unnatural."

"I don't expect you appreciate it. Those outside of the Catholic Church have such very imperfect, misty views of the doctrine of the Incarnation, that Mary's true position would necessarily be quite unintelligible to them."

"There is another grievance we have against you, and that is that your worship is in the Latin tongue, and, as all those who are not good Latin scholars must be in ignorance of the words used, your worship appears to me to be senseless, and without any good to the congregation of worshippers."

"What should you describe as the object of congregational worship?"

"Well, we go to church to get some good, to brace up our souls to love God, to receive from Him consolation, encouragement, hope, edification: we meet together according to His promise that He will be in the midst of us, we unite together to ask for His blessings, we beg Him to make us wise, healthy, prosperous, happy, contented in this life, and to take us to heaven when we die."

"Well, is that all?"

"Then what would be the good of a clergyman mumbling—excuse the remark—a lot of incantations in a foreign tongue that we did not understand? We should go away worse rather than better—cross, tired, bored, impatient."

"I asked you for a definition of the object of congregational worship, and you have only given me a list of wants, not wor-

ship. You see our ideas of worship are totally different. The first act of worship we read about was a sacrifice offered to God. Afterwards, when God revealed to man the particular way in which He required man's worship, He appointed Aaron to carry out the minutest particulars when he offered sacrifice for the people. When the Christian dispensation took the place of the Jewish, the essential idea of offering sacrifice was the only recorded obligation of worship. The Christian sacrifice is the Mass of the Catholic Church, wherein the priest offers the sacrifice of Christ on the cross for the sins of the world, as an acceptable oblation to God. Then as to the use of the Latin tongue. The Church is Catholic; not merely national, but extending to every known region of the world. Our priests of every nationality all repeat the same words, and the laity all over the world hear the same Mass; so that a priest from Africa, China, India, France, Germany, Spain, Italy, or any quarter of the new or old world might change places with our priest next Sunday, and both priests and worshippers would be equally 'at home'; thus Catholics from every nation on earth are united with those who have gone before, and present to the world an unbroken unity of worship, thus fulfilling our Lord's prayer, 'That they all may be one, as Thou, Father, in Me, and I in Thee: that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that Thou hast sent Me.'"

"Yes, but why not translate the service forms for each nation?"

"Translations are frequently very unhappy; I will give you an instance. A Protestant attempted to translate into Chinese the words:—'Behold, the Lamb of God!'—and that became 'See, the young of the sheep of God!' No wonder the Chinese considered this translation of the Bible as the most comic book ever written in their language. With regard to the Mass, it is not at all necessary for the congregation to follow the exact words; all understand the familiar expressions of the chief portions, and the ritual explanation of the sense, and can take their part by assisting at the Holy Sacrifice; therefore all, everywhere, can and do join in the great act of worship."

"But St. Paul directed that Christians should use a language understood by all."

"Yes, undoubtedly, for preaching; so naturally our sermons are in the vernacular tongue, and several of our devotional exercises. Some time after I became a Catholic I travelled in France, Italy, Switzerland, Austria, Germany, Belgium, and stayed at Rome, and nothing struck me more than that I, an Englishman, was always at home at Mass and Benediction. At Mass in Switzerland, on one side of me was a gentleman with a German book of devotion, on the other side a gentleman with a French book, and I in the centre had an English book: the Mass was of course in Latin, the same as in every Church, therefore we were united in our devotion; the fact powerfully impressed me with the unity of the Church."

"One last question. Have you not had some regrets at leaving the Anglican Church?"

"Would that I had the power to describe to you how my admiration, my attachment, my love daily increase for the Catholic Church and her Divine Faith! Would that it were possible for me to express to you the happiness, the complete peace, the calm tranquility of my soul! Would that the eyes of all could be unveiled to see the reality, the certainty and the perfection of the one Catholic Faith!"

"The reason I asked the question was this, that I have noticed that you converts are hot as fire at first, and then you gradually grow less aggressive, you cool down."

"It is easy to account for it. At first it is a new world to us; we have lived in darkness, and suddenly we are in a blaze of light; we passionately long for all our dear friends to enjoy the blessing with us. The sensation is so rapturous that we cannot keep silent, we exclaim: 'What beauty! what perfection!' And how are we met? With scorn, contempt, and ridicule. 'We don't believe you, you are a fanatic, an idolator: we are content; we prefer freedom of conscience,' &c., &c.; and they turn on one side, being too proud to learn, or to humble themselves before their Mother. Later on we renew our efforts as we see the unity of the faith unfolding and developing before the eyes of our soul. Then later, when day by day we gradually approach towards a clearer realization

of the perfection of God's kingdom of grace, and we see nothing but cold indifference, blind misunderstanding, and deadly disbelief, we get to think that anyone who has eyes can see the things which we see if they choose: but they prefer darkness to light. Then on the other hand, as we look back upon Anglicanism from an outside point of view, and behold it in its nakedness, it seems utterly incomprehensible to us that God-loving, honest people can rest content and satisfied in their lives, and in their deaths, to belong to, and rest their eternal hopes in 'a city of confusion,' without law, order, or authority: a system essentially of negation, compromise, and private judgement: a system which dare not pronounce any of its doctrines as infallibly true, any of its errors as 'damnable heresy,' without allowing the contradiction of its judgements to be disputed as honest views. So we sigh at the hardness of the world, and all that is left for us is to pray for those who will not listen, and my impression is that unknown to them, and often to ourselves, we do them more good by our earnest prayers, than by our necessarily imperfect arguments. Please forgive my warmth; I do not in the least question your sincerity."

"I have nothing to pardon, as I prefer plain speaking. But here is the station. Good-bye, old fellow; I see you have a better case than I gave you credit for. Send me the books, I will sample them honestly."

THE CHILD GUEST.

By the Rev. George Bampfield.

A Christmas Eve. Worse than the snow which is proper to Christmas, a furious gale driving straight from the sea, and howling as it came with anything but a Christmas greeting, knocked savagely at the door of Terence Dooley the fisherman, and flung the driving rain against the little cottage, as if it abused the owners because they would not let it in.

"God help him!" said Terence, "and all who are at sea this night."

"Help him!" said Mary, as she filled for her husband that strange silent comforter which has more power to soothe than the tongue of man—his huge briar-root pipe—"Holy Mary and all the Angels of Heaven help him, for it is help indeed that he will want with his wild ways wherever he is. I little thought that my first boy should be such sorrow instead of help."

"Heaven pardon the poor boy as I do, Mary: it's help we've been wanting ever since he went, and none to give it:—just such a wild night as this it was, Mary—"

"What's that, Terence?" The noise that had startled Mary was strange. It was not loud and rude, a gentle, almost timid, tap at the lower part of the door, and yet in the midst of the sighing and sobbing of the wind, and the heavy plunging of the mad waves upon the shore, the strange soft sound clamoured to them with a commanding power which was not in wind

or wave. Was it fancy, or the weakness that came of hard times and much trial? To be sure, the cottage was within in perfect silence. The second son—the eldest, since Michael left so cruelly—was away on life-boat service, and the little child of three, born to them on Christmas Eve three years ago, was sleeping with a quietness of rest which was as securely peaceful as the storm was wild.

Terence did not stop to wonder. He undid the bolts; the wind swept the door open with an impatient burst which well nigh flung him to the floor, and there stood the author of the weak-strong tap, a child of three years old. A strong little thing he must have been, for the wind which had burst the door back so rudely had no power over him. He stood there unmoved and spoke no word.

"I wish to come in, please," he said at last, with a voice which was like his tap, strong in its softness, "out of the rain."

"Who are you?" said Terence: but Mary's motherly heart stopped the question on its road.

"What matters who he is, Terence? a poor little thing in the storm, dripping with wet, poor dear, from head to foot! Come in, little man? that you shall!" and there was hot water in a few minutes on the fire, and Frankie's bath made ready for him, and a dry suit of Frankie's clothes brought to put upon him, that he might sit down dry and warm to such supper as their poverty could give before he slept.

Was it so in very truth? So at least it seemed to Mary: as she was busy in her loving care, it seemed that there came to her, out of her hospitable work in

some way, a quiet and comfort which she had not felt since Michael went away; and the touch of his soft firm limbs—for in them also there was that mingling of strength and softness—gave her a peace which was as new life to her.

When all was over, the last brush given to the long hair, and the child seated contentedly at his simple food, "Who are you?" Terence asked again, for he could not help marking, as did Mary, how like he was to their own Frankie, and yet though so like, a something more than Frankie; the same smile about the mouth, and yet a sort of gloss and brightness, a delicate lustre, a most pure light, which did not shine, even to their eyes of love, over their sleeping babe.

"Who is your father, my child? Surely some noble gentleman?"

"You are as good as I," he said, "better than I: yet my father is rich and strong and great. But let me lie down: may I be with Frankie?"

Had they uttered Frankie's name in his hearing: clearly they must have, or how could he know? And they put him to bed side by side with his little brother, and as they lay so like, so unlike, so strangely peaceful both, Mary whispered to her husband, "God has sent us twins, Terence!"

"But how shall we keep them, Mary? Heaven help us, we were poor enough before." And the strange steady life which was in Mary answered "Don't think of that, Terry: could we shut the door on that baby face on Christmas Eve? God sends the mouth and He will send the food."

But it did not seem so at first. The sudden flight

from home of the eldest boy, just when he might have been their comfort, was the beginning of trouble. In part it came from the growing up of the many children, too old now for children's fare and children's clothing and children's little beds, and yet not old enough for the work and the wages of men; but in part also from misfortunes, even if they were the common misfortunes of a fisherman's calling. It was from no want of care in Terence—for he was as good a fisherman as any who tossed upon the rough waters which beat upon the western coast—that his nets were so cruelly torn that, having no means to replace them, he must give up his deep sea fishing, and do what he could with the small fry of the swallows and the sands. It was through no fault of his that his cabin—which, poor as it was, was not his own—was too small to house him and his fitly, and too old and storm-tried to keep out the weather. It is hard for the poor to rise: no one can climb a crag unless a resting place be found here and there on which to set the foot.

And yet, though there were few days in which store was laid by for food, food there always was. To-day a stranger would ride by and alighting get his horse held while he looked for shells or hunted for fossils or climbed a height which could only be reached on foot for view or sketch; and before he rode on somehow the Twins, as everybody called them, caught his eye and drew out of his pocket a silver coin for each. And sometimes when Mary had nothing to set on table the little fellows would come running in, "Look, mother, what we have found!" and a bonny fish was there nough for all, though neither of the little men seemed

able to say exactly how they came by it. "Francis" —for so Mary would have the stranger called, while her own little lad remained "Frankie,"—"Francis earns his living, Terry;" and so indeed he did, not only by drawing the gift out of people's hearts, but by his joyous life within the cottage, which in the midst of struggle kept up the heart of father and mother when things were at the worst.

And yet the cabin was tumbling down and the fisherman's boat lay idle. "Sell it, Mary?" "But who is there to buy it, Terence?" And "no, no!"—as perhaps the little stranger put his soft firm hand in hers and she felt that steady life well up within her—"No, no, Terry, the tide must turn—it always does, Terry—have you ever known it fail?"—and so the boat was not sold. But it seemed likely to rot, and the cabin was rotting.

Christmas Eve had come round again, and Frankie and Francis had added a year's growth to their little limbs. They had been picking up a good deal of money lately, for the Squire had been building a strong cabin, larger than their own and with more rooms in it, close by; and the Twins, with their winning ways and their strange unlike likeness, were great favourites with the workmen one and all, and brought home many a gift in money or food—sometimes in a little clothing for themselves—to father and mother.

It was Christmas Eve again, and Frankie said "Mammy, may we play at the coming of Francis?"

"Yes," laughed Mary, "what game is that?"

"Why! you and Dada sit down, and give Daddy his pipe, and Francis and I will go outside and we'll knock

at the door, just gently you know; and you'll let us in and ask us who we are and make us very snug and happy because it's Christmas Eve—won't you, mother?"

And out they went for their childish acting; but when the knock came and Terence and his wife opened the door—"See!" laughed the lads, "we've brought another stranger to-night!" And sure enough there were the Squire and his lady and behind them a servant or two.

"Terence," said the lady, "you won't mind our coming in like this, will you? But we want your help."

"Anything I can do, ma'am" said Terence, trying to hide his big pipe.

"Well, my husband's been building a cabin quite near here, and your Twins have been useful little boys and we're all fond of them——"

"The truth is, Terence," broke in the Squire, "now I've built it I don't know what to do with it: it won't do for my lady and the children, not even in summer, and I want some one to take care of it."

"And we thought you might like it," finished the lady, "so if you'll just come and look at it with us—put on your bonnet, Mary!"

Out went the party, the Twins running hand in hand before as if somehow they were in the secret. And when they had all got in, there was a fire burning, and a good dinner ready to be cooked on the morrow, and cooking things—pots and pans, and oven and everything else for Mary, and just the number of rooms that the family wanted—"as if it had been built for us," cried Mary—and bedsteads and bedding all ready upstairs, not forgetting two little cots for the Twins; and in the parlour —"a parlour for us, Mary! why! it's like our wedding

day"—chairs and tables, and everything "like people of fashion," as Mary declared afterwards when she told the tale: "a furnished house and no rent to pay for the rest of our lives!"

And on that very Christmas Eve the old cabin was left desolate, to tumble down if it liked: and the Twins finished their game at the new cabin door.

"The tide is turning," whispered happy Mary to her husband that night; "and, Terence, I think I was right: Francis is earning his living!"

II.

THE first year in the new cabin was nearly over, and the fortunes of Mary and Terence Dooley had not greatly improved. They had indeed brightened, for not the gloom of the long November, heavy beyond most years with one never-lifting fog, could crush out the joyousness of the Twins; and the larger rooms, the bright furniture, the many contrivances to make the days pass easily, which the Squire had crowded into what he called the "bathing machine," still gave a newness to the life of the poor fishers which was as sauce to their hard fare. Still the fare was hard, the poverty as deep, the anxieties as great; and many a time Mary's heart would have sunk, if the Twins would have let it sink. But they did not: whenever "Mother" was sad, up, as if by instinct, would the bonny children come gambolling to her side, and as Francis took her right hand and "Frankie" covered the left with kisses, that strange aid of powerful peace stole on with its quiet might and drove out the November fog.

"What think you, Terry?" asked Mary, "Will Larry be home to-night?"

It was a question Mary was always asking. Now that Michael seemed lost to them beyond hope, the mother's heart fastened itself the more firmly upon the lad who deserved her love, the bright brave seaman who was known all the coast around, the stout strong heart in the stout strong body, ready for any labour, fearless of all danger, eager to make one if an extra hand was wanted in a fishing-smack, the sharpest to give warning of a coming storm, the first at the life-boat, though as yet too young for a regular hand, and the surest to be first when the danger was greatest. It was no wonder that the mother loved him, it was no wonder that his comrades loved him, or that Laurence Dooley was the pride of the sea-coast for many a mile. Still it was a bare living that he earned for himself; if the father's old smack were but sea-worthy again, and if as many nets as of old time lay drying on the beach near the cabin door, or over the ship's side—then indeed—but what was the use of day dreaming! He kept himself; it was about all he could do; and as he couldn't go home unless he'd something to bring to "Mother," it was but seldom she saw him. "No, no; I'm not going to be a burden to them—they've enough to do—bye and bye—we'll see."

"Will Larry be home to-night, is it, mother?" The usual answer to the almost daily question was a saunter to the door, and a stand of five minutes as he looked out upon the weather, and a quiet return to his seat with a "Maybe, mother, maybe; who's to tell?"

But to-day Terence didn't stir. "Not to-night, mother; you needn't be putting the sheets out; in such fogs as

these he's too handy near the life-boat ; and that storm'll be round again to-night, or I've never been to sea ; it's been coming up since morning."

" Poor boys !" said Mary, thinking of both her sons ; but as the tears started to her eyes, the Twins who had been playing in another room came quickly to her, and the coming of the storm seemed of a sudden to speak peace to her and not sorrow.

It was indeed a terrible night: the fog, the sailor's worst foe, was, it is true, swept away by the rising gale, but in its place came an enemy, nearly as deadly as fog —a numbing, blinding snow-storm. There was none of the silent softness with which on a quiet day the snow-flakes tremble down to weave a spotless garment for the earth. It was flight after flight of ice-knives, blinding the eye and cutting even the weather-hardened mariner's skin till they drew blood with their sharpness. The lifeboat-men were right to be ready on such a night— they knew that on the dangerous sands that lay a mile or two off their shore it was next to a certainty that some vessel would go down that night. And as the muffled roar of a cannon came to their trained ears through the howling of the wind and the lashing of the surf, and the deadened gleam of a signal rocket flashed like a streak of blood through the snow, their answer was " There she is !" as if they knew of her coming, and there arose an almost joyous shout that they were called once more to the unselfish danger which they loved well.

" Come along, Larry ; Steve is down with the ague," and into the boat right gladly jumped the brave lad. No time to think—no will to care if he did think—of the

stinging, cutting snow arrows: it was worse for the steersman who had the full bitterness of wind and cold upon his face and in his eyes, and who was driven to use oar instead of rudder, lest in so mad a sea the rudder should be unshipped. Larry thought only of pulling with a will, pulling with all his might, and holding the water firmly at each stroke, spite of the lurches which might make him, being a young hand, give a useless stroke in air and fall sprawling, to the boat's delay.

There had been no second signal from cannon or rocket—no sign to guide them in which way to steer. The blue light which they might have seen even in a snow-storm some two miles off had been lit, perhaps, but if so it shone no more. "She is going," or "she is gone," they may have muttered to themselves, but no word was spoken as the boat sped on—if we may call it speeding, where wind and tide strove together to keep back the aid—with hearts that did not fail. "Lives to save—lives to save!" was the thought, and onwards, towards the part of the sands which they knew as most dangerous, they went forward painfully. In calm weather it was a row of over twenty minutes: now it was drawing towards the end of an hour before they reached the sands, and then they must grope their way towards the spot from which the cannon seemed to have boomed and the rocket flashed.

There was a puzzle added to their groping that night, of which the oldest hand among them would not have dreamed. It was indeed a storm, and one of the light-boats, stationed by the Trinity House in spots where lighthouse cannot be, had been on that long-remembered night torn from its moorings and lay itself a wreck

upon the sands from which it was to guard others: seldom indeed in the memory of man had such thing been. There was no light to guide: the light of the arrowy snow made light indeed, but a light to blind and not to guide.

What was it? Was it a cry, a moan? Or the sobbing of the waves striking a note out of something, which rung nowhere else? Whatever it was, the steersman's oar guides the boat towards it, cautiously lest the waves fling the life-boat too rudely upon wreck or whatever it may be. Yes, a something standing out of the wild waters, a white line looking fixed amidst the shifting, scudding, white of the snow-flakes—the one thing left of the doomed vessel, which the greedy sands had swallowed up, sucking it down like an open-mouthed living monster. The highest of its masts, and on it a something; was he a man? the snow had crusted on him till he looked like a pillar of ice. They must get on the other side of it, or the waves will dash them upon it. Now out with the grapnel, the hooks by which they shall lay hold of the bit of mast or anything it may catch, to hold the boat to the mast while wind and wave shall keep her from striking upon it—and silently but strongly the boat lies floating to render aid if aid can be rendered. Is he dead? There is no cry now, no sign, no sound. He had lashed himself, as it would appear, for the cords seemed fastened as by numbed and trembling fingers—to the higher part of the highest mast, as long out of the reach of the mad sea as may be; no longer indeed quite out of its reach, for now and again a higher wave makes at him and wraps him round.

The men look at one another; Larry is the youngest;

and without a pause he has left his seat in the boat and is upon the mast, clambering to the poor fellow's side, be he dead or alive. "Bravo, lad!" is the unspoken word in every man's heart.

The cords had been loosely tied, but they were stiffened with frozen snow and wet with the occasional drenching of the wave. Many a wave breaks over him, his fingers are growing numbed; even if they were not, the ropes have grown like iron with the wet and frost, and his sheath-knife with which he would have cut them will break if he force it more. He lowers himself a little down the mast: is he giving up? not he! he is but seeking one of the small hatchets which the life-boat carries, and with this he is soon hacking away at the hardened rope. He must have a care lest the sailor, still living as he hopes, slip from his grasp at the last and go down, frozen as he was, like a mass of marble in the sea. He has him over his young strong shoulders; cautiously he lowers himself to the boat as the fierce waves spring upon him angry to be cheated of their prey.

There was a cheer—they couldn't help it—as the still breathing sailor was placed in the boat at last by the rough hands of the boatmen, with all the tenderness which a mother could have given to her babe; and instantly the boat's head was turned and with fresh spirits and glad hearts the strong arms draw her on towards the shore, even the wind and tide compelled now to help hearts that were so true.

"Why! you'll have a house full to-night, Mary," said the cheery voice of the Squire.

"Yes, thank God!" said Mary with a curtsey, "and

thank your Honour and your good lady, it will be a comfortable home for them both, poor boys!"

"Where's Terence?"

"Oh, he's gone to help to bring them up, your Honour! and the Twins and all; I couldn't keep them in. 'Let us go, mother,' they kept saying, and Francis promised to take care of Frankie."

"There, Mary," said the Squire's lady, "I have finished everything upstairs, and there is a nice fire blazing in Mike's bedroom, and the bed—Oh, how clean you have made the coverlets look, it is a treat to see them."

"It is getting late, my lady," said Mary, with a little tone of anxiety in her voice; "I wish they were in:" and even as she spoke came that soft strong tap which sounded first when Francis came two Christmas Eves ago.

"We want to come in, please," laughed the two urchins, and in came not they alone, but a procession—a procession of life-boat men and fishermen and kindly hearts from the coast around; and last of all Larry, and leaning upon his arm—but she has flung her arms around his neck; she had seen him indeed before as he lay on his sick bed before they dare bring him up to the cabin; she had been down to him more than once and nursed him a bit in his sickness; but he was too weak then for mother's tears, and she was welcoming him now for the first time to her own home which he had left, and all the remembrance of all the sorrow and all the sin, aye! and all the forgiveness, came rushing on them both as she clung round his neck in an embrace which she could not end—her lost treasure, her hope, her darling, her boy, brought back to her by that other

boy, that second first-born, of whom all the country with her was proud—her Larry.

And Larry! The little ones had possession of him: Frankie on his left as usual and Francis on his right.

"Come, mother," said Larry at last, "you will tire Mike; besides you must come away and thank Francis."

"Thank Francis, Larry?"

"Yes, and so must Mike. I'll tell you mother, and I'll tell you all: you know they say it was well done of me to save poor Mike as I did?"

"So it was," shouted the men in the cottage: "So it was," echoed the Squire.

"Well," said Larry, "I only did my duty, and I shouldn't have done that except for Francis here. What's in the boy I don't know, but when I happened to slip up the day before the wreck and just put my head in at the door and turned away, who should come running after me but Francis! He asked if there was not bad weather coming on, and he slipped his little hand into mine, and somehow I felt that strong that full of pluck I could have saved a whole shipful, let alone one man."

But somehow when all turned to look at Francis, the little boy and Frankie were for the moment not there.

"The tide has turned, Terry," whispered Mary to her husband that night, as she came to him from looking at her two sons quietly sleeping. "The tide has turned, and Francis is more than earning his keep!"

III.

"Aye, mother! your tide takes longer turning than most. It'll be a long time before we're afloat, I'm thinking, if we have to wait for it."

It sounded bitter, and indeed it was so. Mary was always prophesying good things, and Terence could not deny that they came. "Wasn't the cabin, free of rent, a good thing, Terry? And wasn't it a good thing to get back our poor boy, Mike, whom we gave up for dead and worse, and who wasn't dead at all?"

"Dead, Mary! isn't it as bad to be most of his days on his back and the rest of his time crawling about, with hands like a gentleman, with not strength enough to look after a pleasure boat? Your blessings always go hand in hand with troubles."

"And isn't that the way of life, Terry? Did your nets always bring in the good fish that would fill stomach or swell purse? Or hadn't you sword-fish to tear your nets for you, and eels to bite and little bits of sea-snakes to sting you? It's no use, Terry; you want the next world in this, and you won't get it. I'm sure I'd rather have Mike home and all of us starving, than Mike away and the rest of us full of food."

"Right you are, Mary; and it isn't the poor lad's bite and sup that his father is grudging him; but it's hard, woman, it's hard not to be able to earn the bite and sup for us all, and you the patient good wife all the while, that's worth all that the best husband's hands could earn. My hands are strong and not like a gentleman's yet!"

"And it's plenty of work you'll have to use them on, Terence, if you'll wait."

"And haven't I waited and waited and waited?" And the huge puff of smoke that wreathed up from the pipe showed Mary that the honest fellow's heart was full, and that she had better leave him alone.

And indeed it was hard. The second year was now passing since their hearts had been lifted with joy and hope at the return of their lost Mike. A good lad he was now, and full of true-hearted sorrow for the pain which he had brought to his home. A good boy; but if his absence had robbed them of the aid for which they had a right to look, his presence now made heavier the heavy weights which they had to bear. "I'm frozen, mother," the poor lad would say. "That monkey-jacket of ice in which Larry took me off the mast sticks to me yet. I can't speak up for it as a jacket to keep a man warm!" And indeed he looked frozen, and nothing could he do that wanted life and strength; his breath came short, and the big drops stood out on his forehead, if he tried so much as to help in hauling a net up the beach. He had his punishment now for running off to sea; unwilling load, as he was, upon his parents.

"It's all very fine," muttered Terence to himself as he walked off with hands in pockets, "we shall all be dead before mother's tide turns; but what's this?" And as he spoke up from the shore came a little procession which made him turn back in all haste to the cabin. "Here, mother, quick; warm blankets and a good fire and everything ready for our little Master; he's half drowned, poor boy, but we'll bring him to yet. Here, you see to him, mother; and, Francis, you two boys off to the doctor as quick as you can go, and I'll run up to

the Squire's to tell them and bring all help I can."

With more skill than many might think, and with more kindness, too, the rough fishermen set about restoring Master Corrance to his senses. It was not the first time that they had seen a half-drowned man, and if they had not a surgeon's knowledge and science, they knew the tradition of the coast which had often brought round the drowning, and they saw that the boy was not gone yet. When therefore Lady Corrance and the Doctor came, they had little to do but arrange the carrying up of her rescued darling to his more comfortable bedroom in Cliff House.

"And how did it all come about, my little man?" said the Squire as he took Frankie on his knee that evening; "they tell me you behaved like a hero, and that my boy——" but here the Squire stopped suddenly, and turned his head away.

"Oh!" said Frankie, lifting himself with a child's quick sympathy to the Squire's face to kiss him, and then sinking down appalled at his own boldness, "it was all Francis, you know, not I. Harry," for so the little fellow called his frequent playmate, young squire as he was, "had gone without us. Mother couldn't let us go with him just then, and as soon as we could, but it was a long time after, both of us ran down as hard as we could go—for somehow I felt afraid, and so did Francis—and when we got down to the shore we couldn't see him, he was nowhere about; we cried out, and you know, sir, that odd voice of Francis gets heard when Daddy isn't."

The Squire was at last able to turn and smile. "Well,

my little man?" "Well! we shouted, but no answer, and Francis looked grave. He can look grave sometimes, can't he? quite like an old grown up man. 'He's gone round the point,' said Francis, 'and can't get back,' and before I knew where I was, Francis and I had pulled off jackets and the rest—for you know he and I swim like fishes. And sure enough Francis was right; Harry had been after shells or something, and gone round to the little bit of a bay between the two points, and got cut off by the tide. He's not much of a swimmer, not like us two who've been at it all our lives; and he had tried to swim round the point, for there was no sea to speak of, and it was too much for him, and he was sinking for the last time, when up we came and just caught him by the hair."

The Squire drew the little child towards him. "They said you behaved like a hero, and they were right."

"Oh! there was nothing in that," laughed Frankie; "Francis and I have played at saving sailors many a time on rougher days, and we've saved many a piece of wood which did for Daddy when it was dry; and once we helped a tired dog along and once an old sheep that somehow had got afloat. Oh, he *was* heavy! but he'd more swim in him than you'd think. Well, between us we got poor Harry along, and when I got tired, Francis, who's a deal stronger than I am for all he's so gentle, he'd somehow get his arm round me for a little, and I felt better after that. But I was glad to get to shore, and poor Harry did look so dead-like, I was going to cry like a baby, but Francis said, 'Bear a hand, Frankie, and run off, and get those men to help,' so I bustled about, and the men took him,

and that's all," said Frankie, a little puffed with so long a speech.

"And a very good all, my boy," said the Squire, "and you and Francis are to be Harry's brothers. My lady will be glad to have two more children."

"Oh, but sir! mother is my mother and Daddy is my father, and neither Francis nor I mean to leave them—never—never. And when I'm a man——"

"I didn't mean that, Frankie," said the Squire, "you shall still be your mother's boy; but you'll let Harry be your little brother for all that: we'll see," said the Squire thoughtfully, "we'll see," and he took Frankie up in his arms and gave him more than one loving kiss upon the little brown cheeks. "How is it, Frankie, you and Francis didn't play at the coming of Francis last Christmas?"

"Oh, I don't know," said Frankie, "I wanted, but Francis wouldn't. He said everybody would get tired of it if we played it too often, and they wouldn't like it so much."

"You must play it next Christmas," said the Squire; and he went away thoughtful.

"Well, Mary, I give in!" said Terence. "Francis *is* earning his keep. Blessings on the little lads both of them."

It had been a long day since golden money had been seen in the hut on the shore; but now, though there was not much came in at one time, there was never a week passed, but the little lads would bring home half-a-sovereign each from the good Squire who was scarcely content without seeing them every day at the House, or his lady

would make a call on Mary and bring with her either food or clothing or dainty for poor Mike, or a golden gift if the household wants required it. "I owe you my boy," would the grateful mother say, "and how can I give you as much as his life is worth to me?"

Yet Terence was not satisfied. A husband and a father likes to be bread winner; it is his right, and he is not a father unless he can preserve the life he gave. So, while outwardly he was more comfortable, the wife's wifely eyes saw that he fretted.

"May we play at the coming of Francis this Christmas, mother?"

"Of course you may, Frankie; a happy coming was it for me. Why didn't you play it last Christmas?"

"Don't know, mother; Francis wouldn't play it; but he says we may play once more this Christmas, mother, just one more this Christmas, mother, just one more."

"He is a funny boy," said Mary, "let him have his way."

Great was Frankie's excitement as Christmas Eve drew nearer and nearer. The boys were mysterious together, but nothing could either father or mother get out of them, but laughter and caresses, and much pretence of some mighty secret.

At last the happy evening came, and duly dressed in their very best clothes the Twins went hand in hand outside. They were gone a long time, and even Mary with all her trust in Francis grew anxious. At last through the silent cottage came the strong soft tap, and with it came, as the doors flew open to the sound, a very tempest, not of wind and rain as on the first night of

his coming, but of shouts, and cheers and joyous cries, as the Twins came hand in hand with their "Please I want to come in."

Why! the shore was alive with all the neighbours round, and heading them Squire Corrance and his lady and the children—the saved Harry first—and——what is this——? fishermen carrying in their hands net after net, a full supply of every kind of net, for deep sea fishing and for fishing near shore—all Terence's old stock come back to him, new and strong and the best that skill could make.

"A Happy Christmas to you, Terence, my boy," said the hearty Squire; "I've brought you something to keep life in these youngsters who kept the life in my child. Not a bit more than you deserve, Terence," for the Squire saw that Terry was breaking down, "not a bit more than you and Mary deserve."

"God bless your Honour," stammered Terence, through his tears, "and give you a happy Christmas and many of them; for I'm a happy man this night. And when I've got the old boat——"

"The old boat!" sang out the Squire, with a laugh that shook the house, "did you think I was going to send your new nets out in an old boat? No, my boy; to-morrow, when it's daylight, you shall take Mary down to the new boat—it's lying in the backwater of the river—and tell me how you both like it. I've christened her 'The Twins,' and alongside of her is a little pleasure craft which I thought Mike was man enough to look after in fine weather and turn a penny by; and I've called her 'Harry,' because it's my boy's gift to you all."

"Has the tide turned?" said Mary that night. But Terence could not answer: he was weeping a storm of happy tears.

IV.

"Is it always to be high tide?" asked Mary, seeking answer from herself, "and always calm?"

She might well put to herself the question on such a day, as she sat there on the beach with the two children beside her and looked out upon a sea which, smiling with ten thousand sparkling smiles, fondled Mother Earth and caressed her with a murmur of pleasure as it lay itself down upon her lap. A sea of mirth and happiness; clear to its utmost depths; not even a cloudlet to darken the smile of a single ripple, and a look of quiet power about it all, and orderly motion as though so it must be for ever; no change for that ocean life: no wild tempest leaping over the angry waves, but always that unchanged dream of happy moving living rest. The mind of happy Mary was like the sea; on one side of her was the saucy little pleasure boat 'Harry' with Mike its captain busy with his craft, making her gay and trim, bright with ribbon and flag, as if it were her bridal-day. He was growing every day browner and stronger and merrier, the most popular 'skipper' in the pleasure fleet; most thoughtful for the mothers, most watchful yet playful with the children, most courteous to the young women, with, nevertheless, a certain dignity of the 'captain' about him when dignity was needed; full of an Irishman's wit and a sailor's fun, brimming over with tales and sayings from foreign lands, it was the 'Harry' and its captain that people sought when they really wanted pleasure.

Now and again the 'Twins' went with him, and somehow, he didn't know why, unless it was the presence of child innocence and confidence—he always felt safer and more gladsome when they came, and they were the life of the little company, so that children and all declared it would not have been the voyage it was without those cheery little Twins.

On the other side of Mary the new fishing-smack had just come in, and Larry was selling its cargo for his father by auction to the crowd of agents who were bidding for the London markets. It had been a splendid catch, and with but little trouble, the fish crowding into the net as into a home; that night alone was almost a winter's store for Mary. Well might she ask herself, knowing that there was but one answer, "Will it always be high tide and always calm?"

"Look, mother!" said Francis, suddenly, "there's a baby cloud coming up from the east. It's very little, but it's a cloud; it's not one of Mary's lambs that lie about the heavens on bright days, but a real cloud with mischief in it; there are more where that came from."

"Will it be a storm, Francis?"

"Not yet, mother, not yet; but we must always look out for squalls, mustn't we? Come along, Frankie; let's go for a ramble, if mother will let us, before any rain comes on."

"Yes," said Mary, "but when will you be back?"

"Oh, we'll be back for dinner, mother: we may go, mayn't we?"

"Yes, Francis; you'll take care of Frankie?"

"Mother, it is my duty, especially now that he's looking so pale." The boys went off merrily hand in

hand; and when Mary turned her head again they were out of sight.

"Looking so pale!" How strange it is that even eyes of love—eyes of the heart—can live on day by day looking on the object of fondest love and yet be blind to change till another opens the love-blind eyes to see. She sat there thinking; scarce answering when Harry Corrance ran up with odd shells or pretty sea-weed to ask what they were, and where the boys had gone. Was this the little cloudlet in the east, which was to bring the rain though not quite now? She had grown so used to her daily life and to the strange presence of Francis that the presence was no longer strange. Had she done wrong in letting her poor little Frankie be so much with this being, who was she knew not whence? Had the child himself done wrong in leaving the father of whom he sometimes talked to be with them?

She flung the thought from her with indignation. Whatever else there might be in Francis, sin there was not, atom of unkindness there was not. Obedient to their lightest wish; knowing her desires almost before she spoke them; making her will his law; a boy in his ways but wiser than a boy, far more thoughtful than a boy, utterly unselfish beyond a boy's love; the sort of rule and power which this humblest of servants, this sweetest of children, had made for himself over them all, had been accepted quietly by them all as right and good. His keeping the secret of how and whence and why he came, was part of that right and good. He was beyond mistake a model of goodness, and since his coming, as they played year by year at the 'coming of Francis,' and afterwards all through the year, little by little dangers had

been removed, and blessings had swelled up like the tide.

The morning wore on and the tide began to go down, but the returning children, as they came with their shout of "Mother, we shall all be late for dinner!" caught her pondering. Frankie pale! No; not now at all events, as he comes bounding up, eye glistening, step full of spring, cheeks red-brown with health; the whole life bubbling up within him like water running upwards from a spring. Frankie pale! she thrust it from her—— and yet "looking so pale" was like the soft strong tap; it made itself heard, and rung in her silent heart.

It was an evening, late in July; already the earlier coming of darkness told of the passing of summer, but it was still very warm and very beautiful, and the heavens were painted with all manner of changing colours, and Frankie looked so wistfully out of the cabin windows and begged so hard, that they bore him down well wrapped up and with pillows to make a rest for him, that he might feel the rocking of the waves and look out upon the freedom of the sea once more.

"Tell me one of your stories," he stretched out the hand which his mother did not hold to Francis, "one of your stories about your country, you know, just as you used to tell when we hid ourselves behind the big rock to talk: tell me about your seas and your skies and the pretty evenings in your land."

"We have no sea" said Francis, "no sea like this—nothing that is sweet and kind one moment and will soon be roaring and swelling and dashing everything to pieces in its wrath. Ours is another sort of sea—a sea of light; always calm; stretching, oh! far wider than

this; and flashes of colour break over it, and up from it, and keep it always the same and yet always more beautiful."

"And the birds?" said Francis, as his eye caught the sea-gulls swooping down, "the birds?"

"Aye! the birds; the birds that skim over the ocean of light, they are more lovely than the ocean itself, each with its own variety of wing, and no other throughout all the sea exactly like itself. But you must come and see, Frankie, and we will be on the ocean of light together, you and I—for you have never seen anything like it, nor heard anything like the music of its waves of light—and the music of you waves of water is wonderful—nor dreamed anything like it, so I cannot tell it you. You will like to come and see it, won't you?"

"Of course I should," said Frankie; "but mother may come too?"

"Yes; mother may come too—not perhaps at the same time—but not so very long after."

"Then will all this happen again in your country?'

"More rest," said Francis, "more health and strength; more joy, more brightness; but we shall remember this when we go together on that sea of light."

"Oh, then let us go," said Frankie.

"When our father calls us we will go——"

"And your father will be my father?" Then Francis stooped over and kissed his forehead, and Frankie looked up and smiled, but Mary did not hear the answer.

And time went on, and the gentle strong tap sounded clearer and clearer. "Poor little lily-cheeks!" said the

Squire's wife as she brought him the fruit or the jelly or the strengthening food that perhaps he might fancy; and the Lily began to droop and hang its white head more and more till the time of flowers was past and even St. Andrew's chrysanthemums were scarcely to be found.

"We shall not play at the coming of Francis this year?" said Frankie with a smile.

"No; not at this door: but there are other doors to which Francis and Frankie may go together and tap, and they will be let in. It is nearly Christmas Eve, mother."

Most watchful and most patient of nurses was Francis: it seemed as if sleep was not needed by him: when Mary, spent with watching, would give herself a night's rest, whenever she might wake and steal out to see her boy, she would find Francis, sometimes giving food and sometimes smoothing the pillow and sometimes sitting with his eyes upon his charge and sometimes on his knees—and her heart began to say, what as yet it had not dared to say, "He is an Angel of God."

Another day, and it will be Christmas Eve, and Mary *must* know. Who is this strange boy-guest, this likeness of her Frankie, this more than boy, this more (for so it seemed) more than man? And Mary called the boy to her aside and said "Francis, we are poor people, and we thought when you came among us that you were the son of a king—as I think you are—and our home and our faces and our ways have seemed to you rude and rough, but the best we could do we have done, and you have been very kind and good to us all and to poor——"

"Yes, mother dear, I know all, and a true mother you have been to me, and most lovingly have you

received me; and it is right before I go that I tell you who I am. I am little Frankie's Guardian Angel, and because he is my Father's beautiful creature, put into my hands by my Father Himself from all eternity, and my Lord's chosen brother, and Mary my Mother's chosen child, therefore have I loved him very much. I have had a right to love him as you have. And when I saw the troubles of you all and how many sorrows you had, and how Terence was beginning to doubt God's mercy, leave was given me to show myself that Terence might see with his own eyes that which is mostly not seen, how God watches, and by us His Angels, over those who trust in Him. I had not thought to stop so long but your Frankie's innocence and your own prayers and goodness, have made our Queen, the spotless Mary, will that I should stay. And now, mother, for you have shown yourself mother to an Angel, Frankie and I will go away on Christmas Eve, and you yourself shall see the last coming of Francis."

It was Christmas Eve—such a night as when Francis came. The wind shrieked and roared and swept around the cabin with savage sound of impatient contempt. But within was calm silence as the boy lay dying. Poor little wasted lily! It was hard to lose him. Larry was away on the stern life-boat duty, but the rest were there and all would have gathered round, the Priest as well, but Francis gently urged that each might take a turn, for some in such illness die quickly and some linger on, and 'you must spare your strength for to-morrow's work.' The Priest was there, but rather for love of the spotless lad and to comfort the sorrowing, than that in

one so young there could be sins to pardon or Sacraments to give.

"Mother dear," said Francis, for still he loved to call her mother, "You will go and lie down, and God will reward you for going. He is the best Comforter."

And she went to lie down, and sleep, spite of her will, came upon her; and as she slept she heard suddenly a soft strong tap as in years ago, and a voice within her whispered it was the last scene in the coming of Francis. It was not at the cabin door that the tap sounded and she was not in the cabin. She was gazing upon the gates of a City rich with gold, shining with gems; and there stood before the gates two forms, very humble both, but one very glorious. She scarcely knew, and yet she did know, in the stately beauty of that created strength, who was bearing and protecting her poor little Frankie, the humble unpretending Francis who had made himself one of the household and the least one there. Was this her obedient son who flew to do her wish? O, lowliest humility, most courteous of courtesy, which would not tell her of his greatness lest he might no longer be treated as subject child! And as she gazed, with a sound of sweetest music the gates of themselves swung open making a harmony as they moved; and there came forth a procession of youths—for so they seemed—and in the hand of each a lily, and round them floating a fragrance of lilies which filled the place around, each girded with a golden girdle round a robe of spotless white. And lo! when they came out to Frankie, of a sudden he was no more Frankie, but grown to the fullest stature like Francis beside him, and bathed through and through with

light; and as they went in with lilies in hands they sang "Who shall ascend into the mountain of the Lord, or who shall stand in His holy place? The innocent in hand and clean of heart. Lift up your gates, O ye princes, and be ye lifted up, O eternal gates." And the last she saw, as the gates began to close slowly behind those who entered was a sea of light, and over it walking, as it stirred with musical heaving of the waves, her two boys more brilliant than the sea.

It needs not to tell that, when she woke and hurried to her boy, the little pale body lay with its last tint of paleness—but a smile upon the face as though the spirit had been glad to go. And Francis? people asked not; it was understood.

And I, who have sung to you this Parable-Poem of the faithful poor, founded on no one fact, but on countless facts in life and on the truths of our holy Faith, I saw in my fancy the last vision of the tale.

Some ten years had passed and the inmates of the cabin had gone on prospering, and they might be called now rich rather than poor; people who had something to give and hearts to give it. And they did what their hearts bade them, and especially on Christmas Eve Mary would keep the 'coming of Francis' still by getting a crowd of little children, to whom food and clothing were of value, to come knocking gently at the door, and in came the merry crowds, and they were fed with fit fare for the Eve, and laden with richer fare and costlier gifts for the morrow.

But the tenth and eleventh year came; and in my fancy I saw a vision which was mixed of things real and

things of which I knew not the truth. It seemed to me that I stood before the gates of which poor Mary had told me—with their gold and their jewels and the music of their voice, if so I may call it, and that as I stood—afar off indeed, for I could not venture near—I heard a voice as of little Frankie which cried, "Brother, shall we play at the coming of mother?" and a somewhat deeper and more serious voice replied, "We will not play at it, but if our King and Queen give leave, we will do the great act in very deed." And then, as I waited, there was a sound as of Angels' wings, and there stood before the gates one poor to look upon and full of grief who, I felt sure, though I knew not how, was the soul of Frankie's mother. And the strong soft tap sounded and with their wave of marvellous sound the gates rolled back. "Master," pleaded a voice, "she who took me in when I showed myself at Thy bidding in the form of a child, now waits without Thy door as I waited at her's; may she come in?" And a Voice from one whom I saw not answered, "Lift up your gates, O ye princes, and be ye lifted up, O ye eternal gates, for when she opened her gates to thee she opened them to Me, and I will let her in."

But still poor Mary stood with arms crossed upon her breast; and the voice pleaded, "Master, when she opened her doors to me long years ago I was dripping with rain, and she took my old raiment from me and put upon me new garments—the best she had, the garments prepared for her own son. Bid that we may have bridal robes in which to robe her, and bridal wreath to put on her head, and bridal veil of beauty to float around her that she may be fit to enter in." And the answer came "Open

My store-house, and My Mother will give you the bridal robes, and the bridal wreath, and the veil of purity, and the ring of dedication, and the necklace, and the armlets jewelled with eternal jewels, for when she clothed thee, she clothed Me;" and there came forth a crowd of women, very fair to see, and the poor dweller of the shore cabin was decked by skilful hands, as I had never seen bride decked on earth. Then Francis and her own Frankie—beautiful Frankie—stood one on each side of the gate as they entered in with their sweet songs of triumph and led her to the knees of Mother Mary.

And I heard the voice plead again "Master, when I showed myself on earth she took me to her fireside and warmed me, and she made me sit down and gave me her own son's bed; and she spread before me quickly the best banquet she could give, though I was a stranger whom she had never seen. And all the time of my tarrying she grudged me no food, no rest, no comfort, no right of sonship. Bid that we may bring forth rich viands from thy stores, and choicest wines from thy cellars, and ointment and perfumes for the hair and for the dresses, and music for the banqueting room." And the answer came, "Set forth the feast for her who fed Me, and I will myself come forth and serve her."

And I saw the Master of the Feast was there, and there was one there most Queenly, most Motherly, with simplest human face divinely cast, whose duty it was to say if they had no wine; and Francis and Frankie stood there waiting; and the gates closed with their sweet music and I saw no more. The Banquet of the Eternal Christmas Day had begun.

The Conversion of Miss Drane

(Mother Francis Raphael)

By BERTRAND WILBERFORCE, O.P.

We may compare the Oxford Movement, by far the most important event in English religious history of the nineteenth century, to that mighty river, the stream of which maketh glad the city of God (Ps. xlv. 5). It was a stream of grace from the throne of God, which cleansed and renewed the life of the Church of England in every corner of the kingdom; while the numbers it swept directly or indirectly into the Catholic Church made glad the city of God.

Multitudes of men and women living quietly in remote country places, not mixed up in any direct way with the course of the movement, were affected sooner or later by the salutary overflow of that spiritual river. They were taken up by the flowing waters, like trees near a river in flood, and carried on in spite of themselves till they found themselves in the city of God, the Holy Catholic Church.

Miss Drane was one of these. In the days of the movement she was very young, living far from Oxford; but the waters surrounded her tranquil home, uprooted and carried her away. She was one of the many, most of them unknown, who owe their conversion to the movement, and therefore indirectly to its leader, John Henry Newman.

Augusta Theodosia Drane, known to so many by the name of Mother Francis Raphael, which she afterwards

assumed as a nun, was born in the east of London, at Bromley, near Bow, on December 29, 1823.

Bromley then was not, as now, a part of London. It was a country village, and many business men lived there to be near the city. Mr. Drane, who was the managing partner in an East India mercantile firm, inhabited one of those old-fashioned brick houses, standing in its own grounds, which were so common at the end of last century around London.

"Our garden," writes Miss Drane to a friend, "was divided from the river Lea by a field. It was really a beautiful enclosure, and included a shrubbery with some magnificent trees, and three lawns, where the scythes were always at work, making pleasant music in the early mornings. My mother was passionately fond of flowers, and my father, who loved to gratify all her tastes, spared nothing to make the garden perfect of its kind."

She was a remarkably intelligent child, and precocious in her reading. "We were not," she wrote, "allowed indiscriminate reading; nevertheless, by the time I was twelve I had contrived to read whatever was readable in prose and verse in my father's library. I consider it was a providence that I had at that time a passion for natural history and natural science. The delight I took in reading about minerals and chemistry drew me away from what I should otherwise infallibly have made my exclusive reading, namely, poetry and fiction. I think if children could only be encouraged in a taste for collections of some sort, it would be the best safeguard against too much novel-reading. My collections were without number, perfectly valueless, but affording also a most innocent pastime."

The fault of character which, in her mature days, she recognized in her early girlhood, was the habit of following inclination unchecked. "I studied what I liked, and the lesson I disliked was always neglected. No one ever had a fault to find with me when geography, history, or poetry

made up the day's lessons; but black Wednesday came with English grammar and arithmetic, and then I was always in disgrace. It was the same with everything; I habitually followed inclination, and could not resist, and this begat a fatal weakness of will. This was not so explained to my own conscience at the time, and the only result of my frequent disgraces was to impress me with a sense of incurable naughtiness which overclouded my mind."

Speaking of her early girlhood, she declares herself to have been profoundly ignorant of religion. "With an intense belief in God as a Spirit, my religious sense was exclusively one of fear. I always said my prayers, and prayed very earnestly to be good; but as I did not grow good, I fancied God did not and would not hear me, and that, like everyone else, He thought me too bad to mend. Of Christianity I comprehended nothing."

Religion, which became in after life her sole interest, and for which she was called upon to sacrifice all, was certainly not presented to her young mind in any attractive manner. A child's mind is at once and powerfully attracted by the beauty of the doctrines and worship of the Catholic Church, but is repelled by the blank, cheerless aspect of Protestantism, and especially by the Protestantism of the early part of this century, before the Oxford Movement had breathed into it some semblance of Catholic life. This is the remembrance of the religion of her childhood.

"Our parish church at Bromley was a beautiful little structure, the remains of an old convent chapel. The beauty of the ancient structure was a relic of the Catholic past, a survival in stone of what had once been; but the living soul had departed. I have no idea connected with that church except excessive weariness at the long sermons. When in town, we only went to church in the mornings; when in the country, we also went to the afternoon service, which I liked considerably better, I suppose because it was shorter. Our religious instruction in the schoolroom was

dry in the extreme. The Protestant Catechism; the Gospels and Epistles, read through, a chapter each day; some, but not much, Scripture history. No part of the Old Testament were we allowed to read, and my knowledge of Old Testament history, up to the time of my going to school, was gathered from some child's 'Stories from Scripture.' We said the Church Catechism, but I cannot call to mind any explanation ever given me on religious subjects."

As to religious impressions, the very earliest recollection she could recall is connected with the reading of the Psalms of the day in her father's dressing-room, "a little function which took place every morning. It was my custom, when our nursery-breakfast was over, to descend to his room, and clamour at the door till I was admitted. As soon as my father's toilet was complete the door was unlocked, and I entered, generally accompanied by the kitten of the period on my shoulder. My duty was to read aloud the morning Psalms, and when they were complete the kitten and I were lifted on the top of a certain chest of drawers, and desired to keep quiet, whilst my father knelt down and said his morning prayers to himself. I felt a great sentiment of seriousness and respect during this singular domestic ceremony, and can even now recall the feeling, made up of so many impressions; the open window looking into the garden, the sweet morning air and sound of the birds, the profound silence of the room, and the sight of my father's kneeling figure."

It is interesting to notice the incidents in childhood that seem to form the character for the serious struggles of future life. Miss Drane recalls "a parable of perseverance" that was acted in her childhood by her brother and herself. It was on the common at Bexhill. They determined to force their way through a part covered with furze bushes. In the thickest part they stuck fast; leggings were torn to shreds and legs pricked to blood. Yet to turn back would be dis-

graceful, so the two little ones pushed on and conquered. It was a triumph to look back upon.

Her taste for reading, while still only a child, was extraordinary both as to amount and as to subjects. At an age when most girls do not soar higher, in private reading, than "Robinson Crusoe" or "Masterman Ready," she read Sully's "Memoirs" in four volumes. She was then just eleven. Robertson's "History of America" was a very early favourite, and afterwards "I knew his 'Charles V.' almost by heart. Hume's 'History of England' I read and detested. Bryant's 'Ancient Mythology' fascinated me, and embedded in my mind a conviction of the truth of the Book of Genesis, by reason of its harmonies with the traditions scattered among the mythologies of Persia, India, and the rest, which all the wild talk and wild writing of the present-day critics will never have power to shake. I used to live in the early chapters of the Book of Genesis at one time.

"We had an old black-letter copy of 'Holinshed' bound in oak, the early Anglo-Saxon portion of which is entirely from Catholic sources. I lived in it. It was from that source I drew all my acquaintance with Saint Guthlac and Saint Dunstan, and the other English Saints. I had such love for Saint Guthlac and Croyland that I kept a little print of Croyland as a relic.

"Bishop Horne's Sermons first attracted me to the symbolism of the Scriptures. His exposition of the mystical (that is, hidden) sense of Eden and the Tree of Life as something sacramental, pointing to a greater Sacrament, is entirely Catholic in its tone. Butler's 'Analogy'—most wonderful gift to non-Catholic readers—was more philosophical than most books that fell into my hands. This was read later. Several books of Biblical interest were earlier; as, for instance, Horne's 'Introduction to the Scriptures,' and Burder's 'Oriental Customs'; the latter of no doctrinal tendency, but valuable because it gave me an interest in Bible reading and illustration. Books are

providences. They have as much to do with forming our lives as friends, or even more. Up to the age of nineteen I had few friends, but I had read many books."

In these days of magazines, when the reading of short stories is often considered quite serious occupation, it is useful to notice the solid mental food with which she nourished her mind in early life. Do we not in this age read fewer "books" than formerly?

As this short sketch is the history, not of her life, but of her conversion to the Catholic Faith, I have noticed almost exclusively her reading on religious subjects. Under this head, when speaking of a school in Kensington kept by two sisters of the name of James, Miss Drane writes: "Every morning we had an hour of Bible study. I delighted in this Bible class which took place before breakfast. I had never before been allowed to read the Old Testament. Now we read and learnt by heart an immense number of chapters, and it was all fresh and beautiful to me. We chose our own chapters. I generally chose Isaias or the Epistle to the Hebrews. We were all obliged to learn and say daily a portion of Psalm cxviii (cxix.). How often I have since been glad of it.

"Miss Ann James considered me wanting in 'vital Christianity' (in which she was quite right), and regarded me therefore with suspicion. Her ultra-Calvinism, and the horrid little proprietary chapel to which she took us on Sundays, the long evangelical sermons we had to listen to and write from memory, and the hymns, not remarkable for poetry, that she made us learn by heart, did not increase my attraction to religion; but Mary James qualified all this by giving me the 'Christian Year,' and Miss Jewsbury's 'Letters to the Young,' which did me real and lasting good."

It was at this school that she became acquainted with that wonderful book, Bunyan's "Pilgrim's Progress," which no doubt strongly influenced her poetical mind. Speaking of it in after years, she said: "We delighted in it at school,

where I first saw it. Let people say what they like, Christian's deliverance from his burden at the sight of the Cross is one of the most perfect things in the English language. I really believe the book, heretical as it is, has touched many a soul in a very profitable manner. The sight of the city, and the shining ones on the walls—well, all that was a possession. I used to think, after reading it, that I should like to go on pilgrimage."

The heresy in "Pilgrim's Progress" is chiefly negative, in leaving out so much of the revealed doctrine of Christianity. False doctrine is also implied about justification, but nearly all the positive teaching of the allegory is consistent with Catholic teaching, or at all events can easily be reconciled in a mind that has the Faith, with true teaching. The beneficial effect of the book consists in this, that it speaks to the imagination, and so brings home abstract truth in a way that the mind can appreciate. The river, the city, the shining ones on the walls make the invisible things visible to the imagination, and help the mind to realize truth.

In 1837 the family left London and settled at Babbicombe, near Torquay. Miss Drane delighted in the beauty of the country, which at that time was far greater than now, when so much has been disfigured with modern buildings. Babbicombe then consisted of only seven houses. It was at this time that her attention was first attracted to the immense field of Church history, and she made her first acquaintance with it by reading Mosheim and Milner, neither of whom satisfied her mind. A book that deeply influenced her mind was "Practical Christianity," by William Wilberforce.

Speaking of this time, when she was gradually developing in mind from a child into a woman, she thus describes her religious state. "Above all other influences under which my mind and my religious sense ever fell was that of the preaching of our vicar, George May Coleridge, nephew to

the poet, cousin of the judge. He was a man of profound patristic learning; his sermons were something you could never hear twice in this world. For the first time in my life I listened to *dogma*. I learnt to believe, and to know that I believed in the Holy Trinity, the Incarnation, the Church, the Sacramental system. I learnt to read the Scripture as interpreted by the prayer-book. I learnt to love the prayer-book, to love the mystical (that is, hidden) sense of the Sacred Text, and to all this I applied myself with inexplicable ardour. I scarcely knew how many new ideas were growing in my mind; but still they existed in my mind only. I do not think I was, in point of fact, gaining many religious habits, or practising many degrees more of self-restraint. Still, it was an education, and sowed in me the seeds of faith.

"In 1839 I was confirmed, and went to Communion for the first time; but I had no ideas on that subject differing from the ordinary Protestant view. Besides, I had still too much of the child in me to go very deeply into all this." She was then sixteen. The winter of 1839 and the next spring were spent in London. "In London that winter I first heard Mass. A ward of my father's, a Catholic, was staying with us, and he took her to Mass on Sunday, and me with her. I understood nothing and liked nothing of what I saw, and on returning said, 'Well, I have been to Mass for the first time in my life; I think it will probably be the last.'"

Though she understood nothing, in God's sight this must have been a distinct and most important epoch in her religious life, the first time she was brought face to face with the great mystery of the Christian Faith, and was present when the Lamb without spot was offered for her salvation. How little she realized that this Holy Sacrifice would afterwards be the light and strength of her life.

Gradually she began, by the influence of the Oxford Movement, to have a clearer comprehension of the Catholic

doctrine, and to understand more fully Mr. Coleridge's teaching. She read Sewell's "Christian Morals," also the "Lives of the Saints," edited by Newman, Isaac Williams's poems, and a large number of the earlier Oxford publications. She thus sums up the result of all this religious study :—

"My first conclusion from all these new ideas was distinctly Roman, but relinquishing the idea as a spectre, I endeavoured to work myself into Anglican orthodoxy, and fancied I had done so with success, though in reality I never had. The event proved otherwise."

Her father strongly disapproved of his daughter's High Church, or, as they were then called, Puseyite tendencies. This was a source of pain to her heart, while at the same time the outburst of new ideas, and the discovery at last of a system of religious belief for which she felt true sympathy, was a deep delight. But in the happiest moments, in the full sunshine of youth, a conviction used to come upon her mind that it would not last, and she seemed to feel that the future would open a chasm between her and all she loved so deeply, as if she were obliged to say :

> "I hear a voice you cannot hear, which says I must not stay ;
> I see a hand you cannot see, which beckons me away."

The first step from the vague unreality of Protestantism towards the definite and clear truth of the Catholic doctrine had been taken by the influence of Mr. Coleridge's preaching. He was a remarkable man, certain to produce a powerful effect on the unformed mind of a clever and sensitive girl of seventeen. Of him and his subtle influence over her, Miss Drane thus wrote : "He was exceedingly shy, and lived a retired life, and the fact of not meeting him among the upper-class parishioners in society was one secret, I think, of his spiritual influence over many of us. No one could attach any other sort of association to him than that which attached to him in his pulpit and reading-desk. I

add his reading-desk, for he had a marvellous gift as a reader. It was not fine reading, any more than it was eloquent preaching, but a simple, impressive skill in giving the whole sense of every word and every phrase. Antony Froude, no mean judge, remarked this as one of his great gifts, and said of him 'that he made the Bible speak like a living thing.' His library was full of the Fathers. In his hall stood a bust—a remarkable head, with hair drooping over the eyes, and a bar of development over the brow. The first time I saw it, and asked who it was, I saw a hesitation in his manner as he answered, 'Don't you know? That is Newman.'"

This, no doubt, was another distinct epoch in her spiritual history, the moment when she first saw the face, though not in life, of the Master, John Henry Newman, the greatest mind of the century. It was like seeing one of the ancient Fathers, whose works stood in Mr. Coleridge's library shelves. He was the centre and life of the Oxford Movement, fraught with such immense issues both for the Church and the country. If the world lasts a thousand years, will not men look back upon him as we now look back on Athanasius, Augustine, or Jerome?

At the time of which we are speaking, 1839—sixty-one years ago, and six years before Newman's conversion—the subject of confession had hardly been mooted in the Church of England; and Mr. Maskell, who first agitated that burning question, used to declare that Miss Drane, who had made up her mind as to its necessity in 1839, "was eight years in advance of her age." But at that time she knew nothing of sacramental absolution as a means to obtain forgiveness of sin. It was as a means of self-knowledge and self-restraint that confession recommended itself to her mind. Self-government seemed to her so difficult that she thought another person might help her to succeed better.

In that same year she read a book that was in a wonderful way an instrument in God's hands for the guidance of

her soul to the true Church. This was Burnet's "History of the Reformation." "That book," she afterwards declared, "was the real cause of my conversion. I was too young (only sixteen), too little used to follow out my convictions to their logical issue, for the impression received from its study to produce at the time much practical effect; but in point of fact, not Burnet's own narrative, but the 'Original Documents,' printed in his alternate volumes, satisfied me, as they would satisfy anyone, of the fallacy of any theory which professes to regard the institution of Henry VIII., Cranmer, Edward VI., and Elizabeth, as any portion of the Catholic Church. Unawares to myself, a deep sense of its unreality was imbedded in my understanding. I built on it a superficial and rather romantic structure of Anglicanism, made up of daily services and Cathedral anthems, high Tory enthusiasm for Charles I. and Archbishop Laud, love of antiquities and church architecture, and intense sensibility to that picturesque view of the English parochial system whereby souls are held captive in a false system, and deprived of the sacraments of grace by the despotism exerted over their imaginations by grey church towers hidden in foliage, and the sound of evening chimes, and the beautiful English Bible and English collects, and a thousand other things which they love and worship and cling to, and cannot tear from their hearts; and which yet, subjected to that terrible analysis which, sooner or later, they must undergo, are all but chaff on the summer threshing-floor.

"I was specially under the influence of this particular 'chaff,' because at that time all my ideas were received, more or less, through sensible images. I was tyrannized over by my imagination, or, to speak more accurately, by the *senses*. We do not relish saying this of ourselves, but what is this susceptibility to beauty but a susceptibility to sense? Underneath and undeveloped, I possessed, indeed, another set of faculties, the existence of which I then never

so much as suspected; but at this particular period the beautiful had far more power over me than the true. The day came when the beautiful was rudely shattered by a terrible blow; and not until then, when that dimly seen and dimly worshipped idol was in ruins, did my reason and understanding assert their just proportions, and I came to crave, at all costs, for what was real, certain with the certainty of infallible truth.

"So for a time the beautiful took its place. Williams's poetry was to me, just then, its exponent. I thought, and still think, him superior as a poet to Keble. Anyhow, he was *my* poet, and line after line of his expressed my innermost heart. But the radical want and defect of that heart was never touched, or but very lightly, by Anglicanism, whether in prose or verse. I was still ruled by impulse, perhaps in some matters by better impulse than formerly, but still I owned the sway of nothing but inclination; 'fond likings and fond hatings' tyrannized over me. This, in plain English, is immortification. It matters little whether we are beginning to practise fasting and watching, if at the same time we cannot command ourselves to do, or not to do, according to the rules of right reason. But this truth had not then taken a firm hold on my mind, and when I thought about mortification at all, I am afraid the Middle Ages mixed themselves up with my notions on the subject, and the particular exercise which commended itself to my choice was occasional *watching*. My bedroom overlooked the sea, between which and me nothing intervened but the steep-sloping garden. I literally looked down, through flowers, into the blue, silvery sea that lay below, murmuring over its pebbles—

> 'Still chanting on through nights and days
> The sweet *non nobis* of its praise.'

Its voice through day and night was indeed like an unbroken chant. Well, it was my custom, and that pretty

often, to watch the entire night by that window. I think I prayed, but I also spent the hours contemplating. Contemplating what? you will ask. I believe it was God, in so far as at that time I knew Him, and that was dimly enough. I gave myself up to contemplating Him in Nature, and listening to what He said to me in the light of the stars, and by the whisper of the pine-trees. For He did speak, and had always spoken from early childhood, to my heart and comprehension through these exterior forms; and now that I had struggled out of heathenism into a certain element of faith, all the truths of Faith symbolized themselves to me in Nature, and that to an extent I find it difficult to express. The world in its beauty came to me like a great sacrament, and 'the invisible things seemed clearly seen by the things that were visible' (Rom. i. 20)."

At this time Miss Drane not only contemplated Nature, and through Nature the God who made it, but she framed philosophical notions about many social problems. One of her favourite ideas, a foreshadowing of a truth that she was afterwards to profess as a practical rule of conduct, was the superiority of poverty to riches. "My ideal, even of goodness, was different from anything that was accepted as good and desirable by the world at large; and, oddly enough, one of the elements of that ideal was—poverty. But, of course, when you are so indiscreet as, in a crude, undigested way, to blurt out before civilized ladies and gentlemen your deep conviction that poverty is better than riches, it is much the same as asking for a strait jacket. I found it so, and learnt to be silent. But marrying and giving in marriage, farm and merchandise, London seasons and the requirements of dress—all these things made a jumble in my mind, which I ticketed 'the world,' and held in abhorrence."

At this time she heard of the missionary labours of the Benedictine Archbishop Spalding in Australia. She was all enthusiasm—"an enthusianm coldly received by my Anglican friends, who called the Archbishop a 'propagandist.' I was

stupid enough to reply, 'So were the Apostles;' but the remark gave scandal."

In the year 1844, when Miss Drane was twenty-one, her theories about the superior advantages of poverty were put to a practical test by various losses sustained by her father, which brought the family into reduced circumstances, a kind of poverty most difficult to bear cheerfully. She bore the test bravely, and did much to soften the bitterness of the blow for her father, who naturally felt it the most keenly. "As to my mother, the real beauty of her character never shone out so brightly." Accustomed from girlhood to luxury and indulgence of every kind, she accommodated herself to the change as if there were nothing to sacrifice. "I grew out of childish ways, and began to understand that the really beautiful thing in this world—the only beautiful, I may say—is unselfishness."

Early in the year 1847 a storm of interior darkness and trial burst upon her soul, to be followed, in due time, by the tranquil day of faith. She writes thus of the winter through which she had to pass: "I began to be conscious that the religiousness which I had hitherto professed was in reality of no substance or worth, and very little more than a bundle of artistic tastes. At the same time, I had come to feel the need of something earnest, something that would guide and support me in a time of difficulty.

"Be it remembered that deep down in my heart there was a *conviction*, but I had never looked it in the face. It lay there as whales may lie in the deep waters, and just come up at intervals to breathe. So also it came to the surface now and then, to be thrust down again and ignored. But with *it* there thus ignored, all the work at the surface was of no avail. My sister partly knew this, and used often to tell me I was one half papist and the other half infidel. Of course I was, and so must everyone be who with the Faith, or its germ, in his heart, obeys and follows a different system."

The conviction lying concealed in the depths of her soul was the truth, gradually assuming a more and more definite shape in her mind, that she was not in the one Catholic Church, and that she ought at once to enter its fold. Her mind was too logical, and her character too sincere, to allow her to rest long in the utterly illogical and essentially fragmentary system of Anglicanism.

In the summer of that year the Vicar of Marychurch, Mr. Coleridge, died. She had so deeply respected him, and had learnt so much from him, that his death was a grievous trial. He was succeeded by Mr. Maskell, who, afterwards himself a Catholic, was then a follower of the Oxford Movement, and of more advanced and decided views than his predecessor.

It was in this time of trial, with no clear rule of faith to guide her soul, that the true conviction of her inmost conscience spoke out in the clearest way. "Smothered for nearly nine years, at last it spoke, and spoke plainly—*Confession*, and to a Catholic priest. *Confession* to ease an overburdened heart, *to a priest*, to get absolution, and to a Roman Catholic priest, because there is no one else who can give it."

She consulted a friend, and was advised to put herself in communication with some Anglican authority first, lest under the pressure of over-wrought nerves she might take a false step from which there could be no return. In accordance with this not unnatural advice, she sought the aid of John Keble, the author of the "Christian Year," and the amusing result must be told in her own words:

"Keble, I think, was an unsatisfactory director. He was kind, amiable, and his own humble, pious character made itself felt in his letters and personal intercourse. But he never laid hands on the soul, or even attempted it, and his direction was always in the way of 'suggestions.' The burning question of confession was at once brought forward, and Keble's direction was amusingly original, if not theo-

logical. The way he 'suggested' of settling it was this: 'Write out your general confession, and send it to me; then go to church and listen to the *general absolution* with great reverence, and that will do until you can make it in person. Meanwhile, keep a copy of your confession, and read it over on certain mere solemn days, Fridays, or eves of the greater feasts!' A pleasant way of preparing for one's 'greater feasts,' and a nice sort of feeling that one's unhappy 'general' was always locked up in one's private desk ready for use! But I do not intend to be savage, and indeed I loved and reverenced Keble greatly, only I felt I had shot an arrow's length beyond the mark he aimed at. I do not mean in goodness, God forbid! but in apprehension of what the Catholic Sacraments really meant. For, in fact, to write out one's sins and post them, and then go to church and make-believe that the 'misereatur vestri' of the public service is your own private and particular absolution, was too transparent a sham for me to succeed in practising. I tried it, and was too much ashamed of the absurdity ever to try it again. With the profoundest respect for one so venerable as he undoubtedly was, I felt that I was asking for bread and he was giving me a stone."

At this time, shut up for some time in a sick-room, Miss Drane cast about for spiritual light in several Protestant religious books, such as Jeremy Taylor's "Holy Living," Baxter's "Saint's Rest," Sherlock's "Practical Christian." After perusing these books, God guided her to the work of a Catholic Saint. She read, for the first time, Saint Augustine's "Confessions." She was fascinated by this history of a human soul fighting against God's grace, and at last, vanquished by Divine Love, seeking Him with all its strength, and finding Him in whom alone is true peace and joy. She calls the reading of that history of a soul "a never-to-be forgotten experience."

In February, 1848, she was in London. Here she had another experience that helped her forward towards the

Church. It was Lent, and "I used to walk to the nearest church where was Lenten service twice a week, and how detestable it seemed! Anglicanism in the country, vamped up, if I may so say, with the rural sweetness of old grey towers and chiming bells, and pleasant walks through fields, etc., is quite a different thing from Anglicanism in a London Proprietary Chapel—all respectability and pew-openers, and a sort of whiskered pomposity about the attendant clergy, difficult to digest. I had with me Avrillon's 'Lent,' and the 'Paradise of the Christian Soul,' and I found it hard to use them in the presence of the particular clerical dispensation which it was my lot to attend. In fact, I was thirsting for Mass and the Sacraments."

On the 19th of April, God sent another trial to purify her soul, and prepare her for the gift of faith. She lost, by a sudden blow, her beloved mother. Only one who has gone through a similar experience, and has travelled as she did with a heart full of grief, though only half realized, to find at the end of the day a house of mourning and the beloved one lying dead, can comprehend what she felt. God speaks silently but irresistibly at such supreme moments, and the impression is never lost.

In this time of trial no one can really console except God, who knoweth what is in man; but God uses human instruments. She became more intimate with Mr. Maskell, who was thoroughly sympathetic in this dark time. He soon had the sagacity to discover that Miss Drane was not contented with husks of Anglicanism, and was sighing after her Father's house. In spite of all, or rather through all, this interior suffering, she began to feel a kind of *mental* strength to which she had before been a stranger.

"Every day, strange as it seemed, incomprehensible then, but not now, I felt a new strength growing—a strength of will and reason. It was that vigorous aftergrowth which follows on the death, or, if you will, the mortification of the

imagination, like the new growth of a tropical forest after a fire has burnt up the old."

She felt the want of absorbing work to counteract the suffering that burnt like a fire within her soul; a state of mind expressed in one of her poems in "Songs of the Night:"

> "Even toil grows dear
> To weary hearts, that know not to be still,
> And work to drive away the sense of ill."

With this view she founded a school in one of the hamlets belonging to the parish of St. Mary Church. She undertook the religious instruction herself, and, remembering her own experience of church catechism, she supplemented it by a number of methods borrowed from the Catholic Church. She hung up a large picture of the Crucifixion, and taught the children before it, going through every article of the Creed, using a work of Ken, called "Practical Love of God." She also taught them Devotions to the Five Wounds, and other things, "which," in her own words, "I am afraid were not taken from the 'Book of Common Prayer.'"

During this parish work she naturally became more intimate with Mr. Maskell, and this resulted in his refusing to allow her to receive Communion unless she went first to confession. Speaking of this in future days, she remarks very justly: "According to the Catholic view he was clearly right. People who desire confession must have something to confess, and if so ought to make their consciences right before Communion. But quite as clearly he was wrong on Church of England principles. The Prayer-book allows people to 'open their griefs,' but nowhere enjoins confession, or prohibits Communion without it."

The difficulty was solved by a visit of Dr. Pusey to Torquay. She made her confession to him. About this she wrote afterwards words which after her death she would pardon being made public. "I shall not easily forget that time, and that day, April 8, 1849. I certainly am not one to make light of such an act, unsacramental though it be,

invalid its absolution, unmethodical its preparation, and irregular its administration. In every one's life, who had decided on such an act, it is about as solemn and critical and momentous as anyone can perform. To me it was the conclusion of a long struggle, and the realization of exactly a ten years' desire. If a soul can give *any* pledge of sincerity, this is it. If ever a true act of contrition, of humiliation, can be elicited from a soul, surely it is in this voluntary act, the fruit of an intense conviction. When it was over I was as unsatisfied on the respective claims of Rome and England as before; I had as much and as little faith in the English Sacraments; but still there passed into my conscience a deeper peace, although the debatable ground of Faith remained unchanged."

Very curiously she seemed at this time to have a kind of unconscious prevision of her future life as a Sister of the Third Order. She drew up a sketch of the kind of life she desired, and, having shown it to Mr. Maskell, he said, "Do you know there is an Order among the Roman Catholics very like what you describe?" "Indeed? what is it called?" "The Third Order of St. Dominic," he replied. She felt a deep emotion, and had to cling to a tree to steady herself, and, returning to the house, she at once wrote in her pocket-book the name she had just heard for the first time, saying to herself: "Some day I shall belong to the Third Order of St. Dominic."

The Gorham case was then proceeding, and helped both Mr. Maskell and Miss Drane to see the hollowness of the Anglican system. The question was whether a beneficed clergyman might deny the doctrine of baptismal regeneration and still retain his position—in other words, whether the Church of England really taught as an essential doctrine of faith the necessity of baptism, or whether her teachers were at liberty to say that it was false to assert that "unless a man be born again of water and the Holy Ghost, he cannot enter into the kingdom of Heaven."[1] Mr. Maskell

[1] St. John iii. 5.

agreed with many others that after all it did not so much matter what decision was arrived at by the Anglican authorities, because the mere fact that the question could be raised in the nineteenth century of Christianity was enough. As a matter of fact, it was ultimately decided by the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council that Mr. Gorham, though he denied this fundamental doctrine of the Faith, could retain his position as a beneficed teacher in the Anglican Church. Nothing more could be needed to show clearly to any who doubted it before that the Established Church is a Protestant sect, and no part whatever of the one Catholic Church of Christ.

The absence of plain teaching in the High Church party, the uncertain voice of the trumpet blown by the authorised teachers of the establishment, brought home to her the lack of any principle of unity and sure foundation of truth. She was expressing herself plainly one day upon these points to Mr. Maskell, when he replied: "That is strong; now just put all that down on paper. Put it as strongly as you can; I will print it." She went home and wrote "The Morality of Tractarianism," a pamphlet of thirty-three pages. It was printed just after Mr. Maskell's "Second Letter on the Position of the High Church Party," and the two publications made some commotion.

Just then Newman was delivering his course of lectures on the "Difficulties of Anglicanism," in London. He quoted from both of these pamphlets, and Mr. Maskell and Miss Drane rejoiced to have helped on the movement, and to have done what they could to enable others to follow their consciences freely and openly.

In the early part of 1850 the crisis came. Mr. Maskell was received into the Church, and Miss Drane, who had already decided that she could not receive Communion again in the Established Church, felt that she must take the same momentous step. But it was impossible to accomplish this without a last mental struggle; and as many who

read this may have to experience the same, the account shall be given in her own graphic words:

"A short period of temptation came upon me. It is one thing to think, another to act; and whenever I do act, I am open to a special temptation, namely, of seeing just then, as if for the first time, all that may be said on the other side. I had spent a longish time utterly discontented with the Church of England, but when the hour struck for leaving her, I saw how intensely I loved—not her, but the superficial charm that clings to her; the rural parochial ties, country life, the having a parish church with a grey tower, the English Bible, the sound of the afternoon church-bell, the poor people, some of whom clung to 'Miss Augusta.' In fact, the Combes and Barton had grown to be my own district. I knew every cottage, and every soul in every cottage; the children knew me, the old people knew me, and between the old people and me there was a strong tie. My sister and I had spent much of our time among the people, and of them, I am so glad to think that many have since lived and died Catholics.

"My school was another tie. It was flourishing, full of children, well taught, and getting to be very promising—'Anglo-Catholic,' strongly flavoured with Rome. Besides, everyone knows what a great charm to flesh and blood there is in anything that is *one's own*, the fruit of one's own idea and labour. Self-love has a great deal to do with this—not all bad, but all natural. So day after day my Barton walks brought home to me the fact that there was more to sacrifice than I had thought of. I knew well enough that there would be an end to visiting the poor people and the rest; and *the rest* was taking root in me. I perceived how it was; all the occupations were getting moss-grown and picturesque, that 'beautiful' was getting up again, and once more would have to be cut down with a sabre-stroke.

"So I resolved on doing what would compel me to do more, and to burn my ships, so as to cut off the possibility

of retreat. I told my father face to face all about it, and my fixed intention of becoming a Catholic. Of course, he was terribly distressed. But, bad as it was, it was an immense relief to me. I had pulled the string of the shower-bath, and now there was no recall.

"Then I paid my last visit to Barton School, and felt that one dies many deaths before the end."

On Monday, July 1, she went to Tiverton to be received into the Church there by Mr. Fanning, the priest in charge of that Mission. "That evening and all the next day was devoted to my instruction, and in the evening Miss Moore (a friend who was also to be received) arrived. Next morning, July 3, we heard Mass. Then came confession, conditional Baptism (what an ecstacy it was to feel the water, and to be *sure!*), and our profession of faith at the Altar.

"How happy I was!—so happy that I could not understand myself. I was not in the least pious, and did not want to say my prayers, but to go into the garden and tell the air and the sky and the fields how happy I was. Mr. Fanning perfectly understood me, and instead of prescribing piety, desired us both to eat strawberries, and I obeyed. I think I ate a good many. I also wished to take a sketch of the house and the church, and sat among the strawberry beds and drew them. The garden was divided from a field by a loose railing, and, as I was drawing, two sheep came and put their heads through to look at us. I drew them, and added a third in the distance. When I showed this sketch to my sister, she wrote over the distant sheep her initials, 'L. D.,' as though to avow that she was not yet one of the fold, and knew it.

"This sister afterwards became a Catholic herself. In the afternoon I returned home. The interior peace of that railway journey—deep peace—I shall never forget! It seemed to go into my very bones, and made itself sensible even to the body. It was not excitement, nor joy, nor high spirits, but peace. I felt I could say nothing, think nothing,

but 'I am a Catholic.' I felt so detached, too, so careless of what the future might bring forth – life or death—all was one now."

So the great step in life had been taken, and she had become a child of the Holy Catholic Church, the Body of Christ, the one and only true Church of God. All her doubts and questionings as to where and what is truth were laid at rest for ever. She came forth from the uncertain twilight into the full light of the Faith.

Two years afterwards, in 1852, she was clothed in the habit of the Third Order of St. Dominic at Clifton, where Mother Margaret Hallahan had established her first convent. She wrote many books, and laboured much in various ways for the good of souls. She died, Superior of her Religious Congregation, at Stone, in Staffordshire, in April, 1894. A remarkable coincidence as to the date of her death could not but strike her spiritual daughters. St. Catherine of Siena died on the morning of the Sunday before the Ascension, on which day that year, A.D. 1380, fell the Feast of St. Peter of Verona, Martyr of the Order of St. Dominic; and her devoted client and biographer, Mother Francis Raphael Drane, died also on the morning of the Sunday before the Ascension, on April 20th, the festival of the same holy Martyr.

Miss Drane is an example of a real convert. That name implies a radical change of religious principle, without which there is no true conversion. This is what is sometimes wanting in those received into the Church from some school of Protestantism, with disastrous results. In the Church of England they have been accustomed to choose their own doctrines—high, low, or broad—according to their taste. When these doctrines have been chosen by private judgment, which is the heretical principle, the next step, as is only natural, is to try to teach those in authority and to raise them to this level. The change of principle on becoming a Catholic is to recognize that the Church has not to be

taught, but to be obeyed as the living Voice of God. A young lady of "advanced views" in the Anglican Church, living in the parish of a Broad Church vicar and in the diocese of a Low Church bishop, would be perfectly ready to instruct both as to the doctrines they should teach; at the same time she would be prepared to point out to the Pope and Cardinal Vaughan that they go too far. In other words, she would desire them all to lay aside their various errors, and to come into communion with her.

It is manifest that if she were received into the Catholic Church in this spirit she would be a Catholic only in name, and would probably before long be very unhappy, and perhaps give up the practice of her religion. The main point before reception, therefore, is to be sure that the intending convert understands that the Catholic Church has been instituted by God to teach him, and that his duty is not to teach the Church, but to "hear the Church," and to believe and obey (St. Matt. xviii. 17).

This Miss Drane, or Mother Francis Raphael, thoroughly understood and acted upon all her life. In the book entitled "Memoir of Mother Francis Raphael" (Longmans & Co.), from which this sketch of her conversion has been taken, will be found more details of her life and works. In a little poem called "Loss and Gain," after noting what she had been called upon to sacrifice by her conversion, she thus counts the eternal gain:

"But, oh! what hast thou won?
A love that is ever pure,
A love that shall aye endure
When the sands of life are run:
Then, mourner, from the dust arise!
Thine are no fragile, earth-born ties
Which part and sever,
But Love Divine which never dies
Is thine for ever."

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